‘I am part of the problem and the problem is part of me’-

A self-inquiry driven action research study on overcoming the negative effects of derailment behaviour in a higher education branch

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the

University of Liverpool for the degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

by

Manon Yvette Pieper-Zwaanstra

Student ID: H00019450

V.1	4th January 2019
V.2	7th January 2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my dear husband Allard William Pieper, who has been the love of my life for over twenty years, and who supported me throughout the DBA programme: a big thank you. In 2013, our son Tygo was born amidst two modules, and without the support of my family and Allard's patience during course work while keeping our little one fed and happy, I am not sure whether I could have reached this point of completion. Even during our time of resettling in the Netherlands and your busy wife completing her thesis, you have been my rock and mental support. I hope I can return the favour to you one day.

To my dearest Tygo Floris Pieper: mommy has now become your favourite 'scientist'! I am so proud of my bilingual little man and I am sure that you will become one of the greatest minds, as you are already contemplating about a future where A.I. takes over and how you can become a doctor in space, even though you are just 6 years old.

To my dear parents, Hans and Adri Zwaanstra, who have always said that I would become a 'professor', ever since I started reading and playing the violin as early as 3. You encouraged me to read and learn multiple languages at an early age, supported me when I went travelling to Northern Ireland all by myself aged 10. You supported me when I went to university in Leiden and Amsterdam to study English and European Studies, and when I lived in Dublin to study modern Irish History for my master thesis. Seeing your only daughter moving to a strange country in the desert and living there for almost 8 years must have been tough despite all my previous journeys. Bedankt.

To my cohort and classmates of the Liverpool University DBA programme: I would like to thank you for your support in our WhatsApp-group. It was incredibly valuable to discuss progress, frustration, laziness and academic interests on a weekly basis, independent of time zones wherever we were around the globe.

To my supervisor Dr Jim Hanly, second readers Dr Alan McPherson and Dr Caroline Ramsey: all your patience and sound advice is much appreciated and valued. Thank you for picking up the pace after a difficult thesis proposal stage and thank you for keeping me focused during times of severe demotivation! Keeping the end goal in mind and being pragmatic about this while never giving up and believing in myself, have always been key lessons throughout this journey.

ABSTRACT

This thesis intends to investigate whether it is possible to detect one's own derailment potential by self-inquiry and first-person action research. Career derailment can be seen as the end result of dysfunctional and destructive leadership behaviour with a very disruptive impact. Derailing leaders exhibit typical personality flaws and managerial issues which have been studied for more than forty years (McCall & Lombardo, 1983; Bentz, 1985; Hogan, Hogan & Kaiser, 2010). Derailment can become a very costly affair with high impact on different levels within the organisation (Furnham, 2010) and therefore this thesis focused on preventive measures and problem solving in action.

The hypothesis is that the researcher is derailing and has either enabled the organisational problem or has become part of the problem due to her responses. Secondary, it is investigated which measures an individual can take, by self-regulation or in collaboration with their organisation, to prevent derailment from happening.

The critical literature review uncovered the complexity of leadership derailment and was complemented by investigations of themes related to the organisational context of the researcher, such as cultural, social, academic and gender constructs. The hypothesis was investigated by a qualitative and interpretative research design, applying first-person action research as the main methodology complemented by autoethnography, using diaries, journals and case studies as sources for scientific analysis and data gathering. Throughout the immersive action research cycles, during which she experimented with coaching, personality assessment and case writing, the researcher always ensured academic rigour by adopting a distant meta-analytic view alongside a first-person narrative for self-inquiry. Limitations of the study were the risk of confirmation bias, accessibility to information and the boundaries found in the organisation such as lack of sponsorship and leadership support.

The outcome of the study based on first-person action research is a deeper understanding into the complexity of self-diagnosis, self-regulation and self-initiated behavioural change. The research findings have led to an application of recommended activities by the development of a toolkit for business education and education management.

DECLARATION OF OWN WORK

The primary researcher, Manon Yvette Pieper-Zwaanstra, hereby declares that this thesis represents original research that has not been submitted previously for publication. The researcher served as the single author for the study, which was completed under supervision of Dr. Jim Hanly as a requirement for the degree of Doctor of Business Administration from the University of Liverpool. When drawing upon the work of others within the existing literature, the primary researcher has provided appropriate referencing and acknowledgement to the sources.

Signature Manon Yvette Pieper-Zwaanstra:

Table of Contents

TABLE OF FIGURES

FOREWORD

In the summer of 2017, my family moved back to the Netherlands after having worked, studied and lived in Qatar for almost eight years. We left amidst the diplomatic crisis between the Gulf States and Qatar, in a year of huge economic and social change in that same country. This move brought about a period of reflection with regards to our professional lives abroad: what did we accomplish and what have we learned from working in international companies, often in overseas branches with their own distinct organisational cultures? As I started pursuing my doctoral degree while already being abroad, most of my critical action learning reports at the end of each module entail precise accounts of the organisational and managerial issues my company and me as an individual were dealing and coping with. These reports all have one thing in common, which is my strong urge and struggle to understand why some managers can be so destructive in their behaviour towards their colleagues and subordinates, thereby influencing a whole organisational culture with negative consequences. When I lived in Qatar, I constantly wondered whether this was typical for the environment and society I worked and lived in and whether it would be different once back in the Netherlands. I observed that it seemed that people derail more easily when the economic and social pressure is high, for example due to the high expectations of expatriate professionals and concluded that it is perhaps more of an issue of getting the fundamentals right in an organisation, such as having an active human resource department and compassionate leadership. Whether this observation was supported or not, my own struggle as a developing manager and doctoral student was real and I often felt misunderstood in my need for guidance and empowerment from my superiors. My frustration eventually led to my own resignation, while I was studying effective ways to avoid the derailment of others. Was I the victim of the dysfunctional behaviour of others, or had I in fact derailed myself – I other words: was I the problem?

This thesis had therefore become increasingly personal. Even though I started the proposal stage with the plan to do research on potential derailment behaviour of promoted Qatari managers too early in their careers (a potentially future problem in the country and even in the region), I eventually understood that my journey of the Doctorate of Business Administration programme was all about finding answers and solutions to the organisational problems of the company I was working for, as these issues directly influenced my behaviour

and enormously obstructed my development as a senior manager. In retrospect, going through hardship and frustration has made me a better manager, as I have experienced what does not work in terms of motivating and leading others. It is my intention to encourage other scholar-practitioners and action researchers to embrace the personal aspect of being an action researcher in an organisation that is really too messy to be fully understood and reflect on their own development and action learning. 'Change only takes place by action' is my favourite quote of HH Dalai Lama, which means to me that even the changes in your own individual behaviour have an impact on the conduct of others if you pursue that action. As an action researcher and as a doctoral practitioner I am very well equipped with the tools to analyse myself, my context, my organisation and other factors, all based on scientific research and grounded in academic literature, leading to either an understanding of how not to manage others or how best to recognize and avoid one's own derailment. In my opinion, this is the strength of a DBA graduate: the ability to find a problem, detangle it, peeling off the layers one by one, and finding a workable solution or an answer with firm roots in scientific theory and research, avoiding biases and assumptions that are not based on peer reviewed facts and figures. This has become my added value as a senior manager in my new organisation, and this qualitative doctoral thesis is the proof of this distinction.

CHAPTER 1: Organisational context and research design

1.1 Introduction and summary of research

This doctoral thesis attempts to investigate destructive leadership behaviour from a first-person perspective, by taking the researcher's organisational context, personality and characteristics as exemplary case studies to establish behavioural change and personal development. The motivation for taking on a first-person perspective instead of doing participative action research (which could be expected from an applied sciences dissertation) originated in the tense organisational culture and political climate surrounding me. It must be stressed that my original research plans were forced to be altered towards the end of my programme. The university's ethical committee had therefore and initially given permission to work with an action research focus group on derailment behaviour that consisted of several and various employees of different companies within the country. When that moment of commencing the field research activities arrived, national politics had become overly complicated after which I decided to focus the research attention inwards. Organisational politics and tensions further pushed my investigations towards a highly personal, but less threatening, level. My aim had been to find a possibility and opportunity to study and help the company in order to get out of the vicious cycle it was in by finding out what I could do in order to stimulate organisational change. Inspired by Marshall (1999) and clinical studies by nurses (Bellack & Dickow, 2019) I adopted a very personal form of action research (AR) called first person AR, which takes the researcher as study object in order to examine (self-) treatments, remedies, behavioural change or personal development, before using these conclusions in professional practice with others. These investigations into my own derailment potential formed a vehicle towards suggested preventive measures and activities that could be used in order to assist other managers in personal leadership development and self-regulation, while also making attempts to tackle the wider organisational problem of derailment amongst senior managers and executives. The insights should therefore be helpful for executives, coaches, business consultants and lecturers in management education.

1.2 The research location and its context

The study is set within a timeframe of five years while the researcher is located at an overseas European business school branch in Qatar. The high ranked business school had started their operations in the region in 2011-2012 with the creation of a management education and

research center within the framework and umbrella of a large local partner organisation specialized in education, research and welfare. The business school had previously set up branches in China and Russia in order to start a global executive MBA and some local professional courses, which resonated with the contemporary pressures of globalized business education (Temple & Ylitalo, 2009), The business model was complex, as it was sharing profits, infrastructure and employees with the partner as well as with the home campus. All staff members were contracted locally by the partner organisation, besides some members of the senior executive team. This complex situation caused tensions amongst different layers with respect to liability and loyalty of staff members and frustration in relation to lengthy or confusing administrative processes at the partner organisation.

Figure 1 shows my drawing of the organisational context and inter-level dynamics 2015, including different interests and tensions in each layer and team. A rich picture from 2012 (figure 2) again shows three organisations intertwined. I drew this picture to make sense of my surroundings, as it was very complex to understand the chain of command.

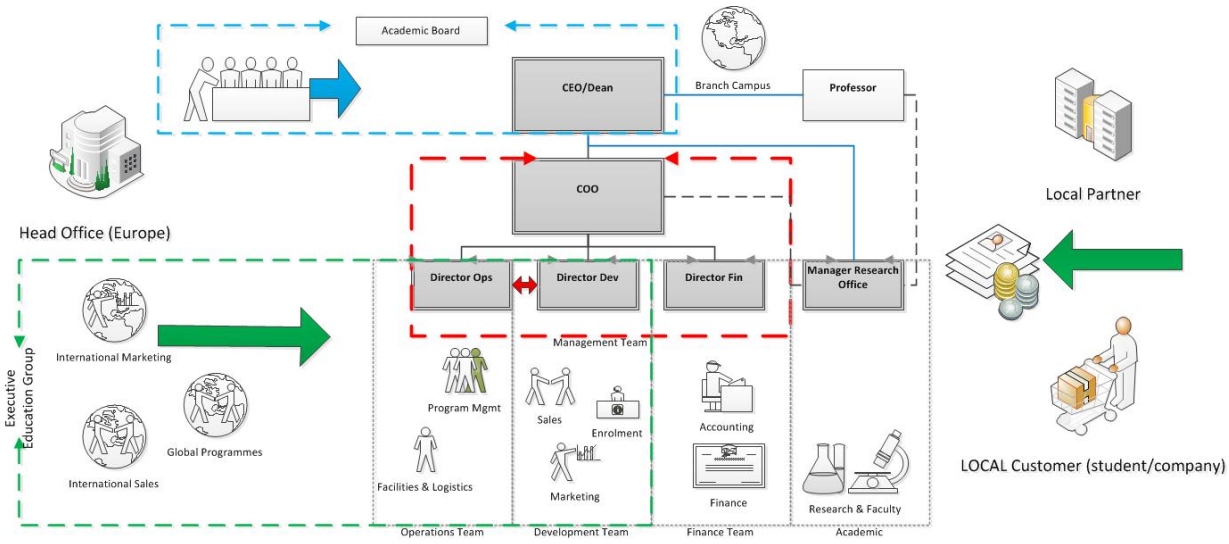


Figure 1: Organisational context (Zwaanstra, 2015)

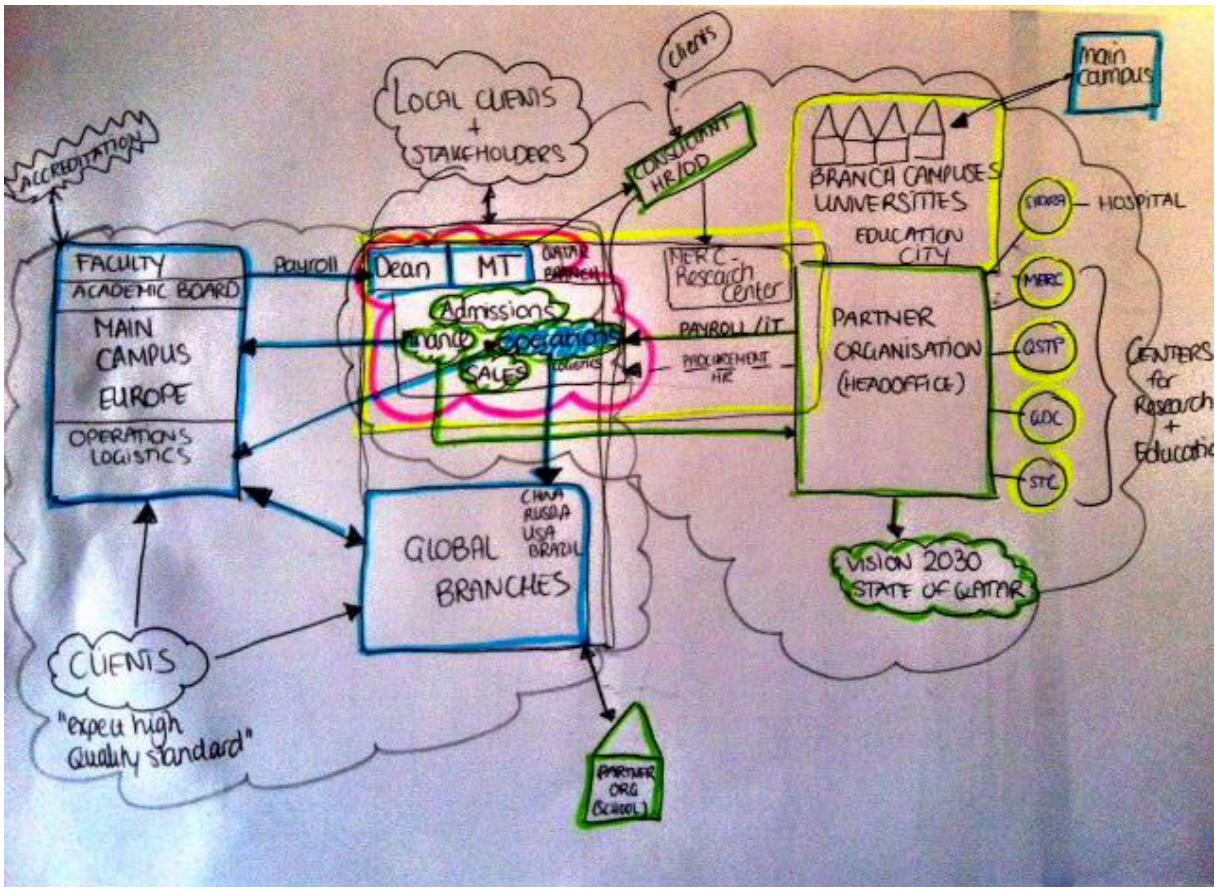


Figure 2: RICH PICTURE of organisational context (Zwaanstra, 2012)

Whereas the partner organisation remained very localized (with more than 50% of employees being native and supporting an Arabic company culture), the business school branch remained predominantly French in terms of employees and culture (despite a growing number of Indian and Arabic employees). It started with two to four employees and had grown to twenty-four employees at the end of the (researched) time frame. Within five years (2012-2016), the branch had seen three Deans operating as chief executives and two different chiefs of operations. Whereas the company started small and informal, eventually a hierarchy and formal chain of command was installed with four to six administrative layers alongside an academic function. The branch developed itself to behave increasingly independent from both its home campus as well as the umbrella organisation.

The senior management team always remained strictly French and Francophone, whereas the rest of the branch existed of Dutch, English, German, Canadian, Lebanese and Indian employees. These cultural differences were obvious in internal communication and

management. When comparing the company culture to the dimensions of Hofstede (1995)[1], it exhibited a typical French power distant and hierarchal culture where inequality is accepted. A quote from the scholar on his website Hofstede Insights describes the French culture I encountered quite accurately: *"Subordinates normally pay formal respect and show deference to their boss, but behind his/her back they may do the opposite of what they promised to do, as they may think that they know better, yet are not able to express so. Another reflection of high-power distance contrary to formal obedience is the total rejection of those in power as there is no way to change by evolution but only by strikes, revolts and revolution."*

Within these five years, I observed major tensions in terms of branch management and staffing. Most internal operations were aimed at profitmaking (selling tailored programmes, regional brand recognition and increasing student numbers) with little attention to employee development or staff promotion. Employees became highly demotivated and tensions arose as the growing autonomy of the branch seemed to give way for a more commanding, authoritative, transactional and directive leadership style. This context is important for me as the researcher as it explains the tense situation I was in, where employees such as myself were finding themselves trapped in their jobs and unable to change the tense company culture. An HR department or any form of employee participation was unavailable at the branch and due to the strong brand and high local profits the home campus was unresponsive to complaints and requests for help. Some former colleagues had sent letters to the home campus and the partner organisation, but these were either ignored or quickly countered. In any case, employees' concerns were not responded to, leading to a continuation (or ignoring) of tensions and issues. This situation was also of influence on any master's or doctoral or postdoc research being performed by faculty members or staff members following education externally. Within the country, the company was well represented and any investigation towards leadership behaviour (even on a positive note) were seen as threatening, which further intensified during the diplomatic Gulf crisis in this period. The branch itself was very concerned with their brand image and therefore it was not welcoming a leadership development or transformative focus group by a non-tenured researcher such as myself, as intended originally. Therefore, I contemplated different options in order to complete my

[1] Geert Hofstede has made the model accessible to the public: https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/france/

doctoral degree. Instead of writing a business case study on the development of the branch grounded in studies on the globalisation of business education, or starting a participative action research project towards organisational and leadership development with anonymous individuals, as a researcher I decided to flip the hypothesis: *their* leadership behaviour was not the problem, but *my* behaviour was of direct influence to the organisational problems and the behaviour of others. Basically, the hypothesis was now reasoning from the insider's perspective in order to tackle the organisational issues. I decided to take on a more clinical view in order to study derailment as an illness that needed proper treatment after careful diagnosis. As some nurses do (Bellack & Dickow, 2019), I would experiment with different treatments by immersion and meta-analysis. It would also require an investigation into my own values and behaviour and each research cycle would have to lead to new insights. The ultimate goal would be to inform others in similar situations by applying these research findings and giving suggestions and directions on how to change.

Figure 3 gives an overview of the what, how and why of the research:

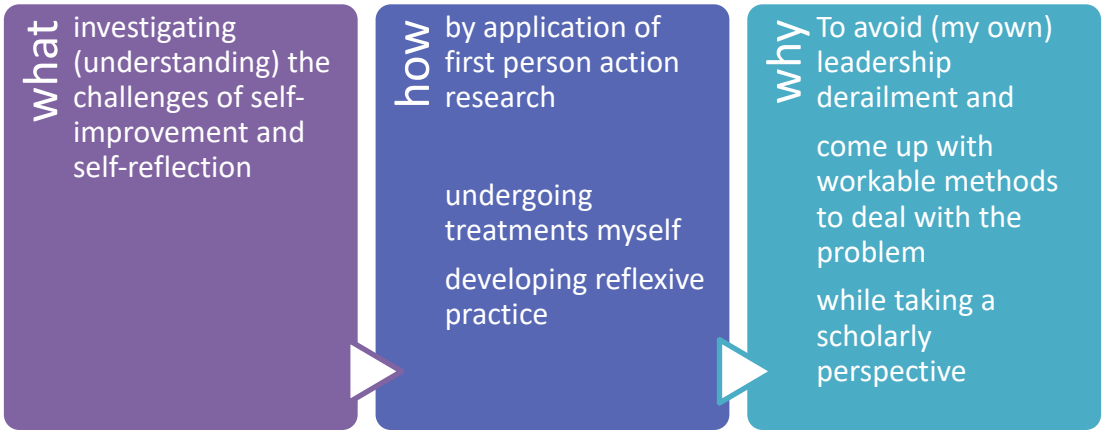


Figure 3: What, how and why of the research into derailment (Zwaanstra, 2018)

1.3 Research design

After carefully reviewing the literature on derailment and possible ways to prevent this from happening or to find a remedy for the diagnosed derailment, the research focus would be on further analysis of my own situation by auto-ethnography and case study, and by finding an appropriate treatment to handle the situation. Its aim was to find methods that could be

applied by others in similar situations, always based on academic writings, and to use these findings in workshops and lectures around the theme of leadership development.

Because a thesis for a Doctor of Business Administration should always be aimed at coming up with actionable results, and applying research in a corporate setting, in order to contribute to academic knowledge with practical recommendations, I adopted an action research approach. The personal inquiry process is of great value during action research according to Coghlan & Brannick (2010). Bridging the theory-practice-gap is also an important focus for business and management research, as posited by Reed (2009). In order to help others in signalling derailment and contribute to both knowledge creation and practical application to ensure knowledge transfer, it was necessary to gain deeper insight into my own experiences and responses to what was going on around me. As a researcher, I aimed to understand how challenging it could be to accept (potential) derailment behaviour as a leader or manager, sub-consequently as a female executive, and as an organisational member of an international company. As a researcher, I was also curious to investigate what could contribute to organisational and individual learning while attempting to prevent derailment. Hereby I assumed that my situation was not in any way unique and could therefore be easily recognizable and generalizable by others, which could contribute to generating knowledge about the practical application of derailment prevention techniques.

1.4 Research Questions

As an (auto)ethnographic researcher I investigated my own behaviour in relation to my environment and therefore I started with the assumption that I was derailing and impacting others with destructive behaviour. The main objective was to find out what I could have done to prevent derailment and its consequences, or what could have been done by my company to rescue me. Inspiration came from Pedler (2008) and one of the DBA classes around doctoral development: 'I am the problem and the problem is part of me'. This problem statement required constant loops of reflection, constructing and deconstructing, while working on the issue. It would become an appropriate hypothesis and working title for the thesis. Initial self-investigative and reflective questions that were noted in my professional diary of 2016 were:

- *Did my behaviour contribute to the organisational problem or was I impacted by the dysfunctional behaviour of others?*

- *Had the organisational problem of misaligned and vicious leadership behaviour caused my own negative response? Had I adopted destructive behaviour and was I therefore derailing?*
- *What could I have done in order to turn this harmful effect around?*

In order to investigate these questions, as a researcher I first needed to perform an extensive literature review and derive contemporary multiple views on leadership behaviour and find scientific checklists or tables that could be used for identification. After his, I would start investigative cycles of experimenting with appropriate treatments or recommended activities until I would have reached a moment where I could form a conclusion and answer the above questions.

As my focus remained on academic rigour and avoidance of bias and over-immersion, the initial questions were translated into formal research questions. The aim was to conclude with an assessment on whether the main hypothesis (*I am derailing*) would be true or false. It was expected that the results will be fuzzy.

Research Questions

R1 (How) can someone recognize their own derailment?

S1: Which type of analysis is most suitable for self-inquiry and reflection in order to prevent or avoid derailment in my organisational context?

S2: Which boundaries/limitations exist in detecting and treating one's own derailment behaviour?

S3: How can academic findings combined with my own experience of undergoing selected 'treatments' be translated into a useful toolkit (checklists and activities) for other business professionals?

R2 Which factors impacted derailment potential and possible solutions in my organisational context?

1.5 Relevance of the study

A firm bridge connecting the multi-dimensional and multi-paradigmatic theory on different approaches in order to review derailment from a *first person* and *insider* perspective has not been solidified thus far, and experiential explorations towards finding the most suitable

method from this insider perspective are scarce. There have been many studies by leading researchers that were aimed at understanding and recognizing the phenomenon (e.g.: Lombardo, 1983; Lombardo & Eichinger, 1989; Van Velsor & Leslie, 1995; Gentry, 2007; Furnham, 2010), but studies are rarely found on the effectiveness of trying to solve the issue from a personal, practical, managerial point of view by account of a scholar-practitioner herself. The objective of this study therefore is twofold: to produce actionable knowledge, by translating academic theory to organisational practice, and to find a truly workable solution on a real problem by emersion and observation of the researcher.

Practically, the thesis gives a truly insider managerial experience of the challenges in detection, rehabilitation and prevention; as well as a grounding into an urgent and current organisational problem. The insider action research outcome is to inform and help managers to mitigate risks associated with derailment and related dysfunctional behaviour, and specifically in terms of self-diagnosis, by understanding the challenges that occur during attempts to detect, prevent or solve derailment. As I work in management education, a logical next step would be to translate the toolkit into a workshop for business professionals or MBA students. The research therefore becomes meaningful when informing and educating others by connecting theory to practice, which is the ultimate objective of applied sciences.

1.6 Navigating the thesis

Figure 4 on page 17 summarizes the structure of the thesis.

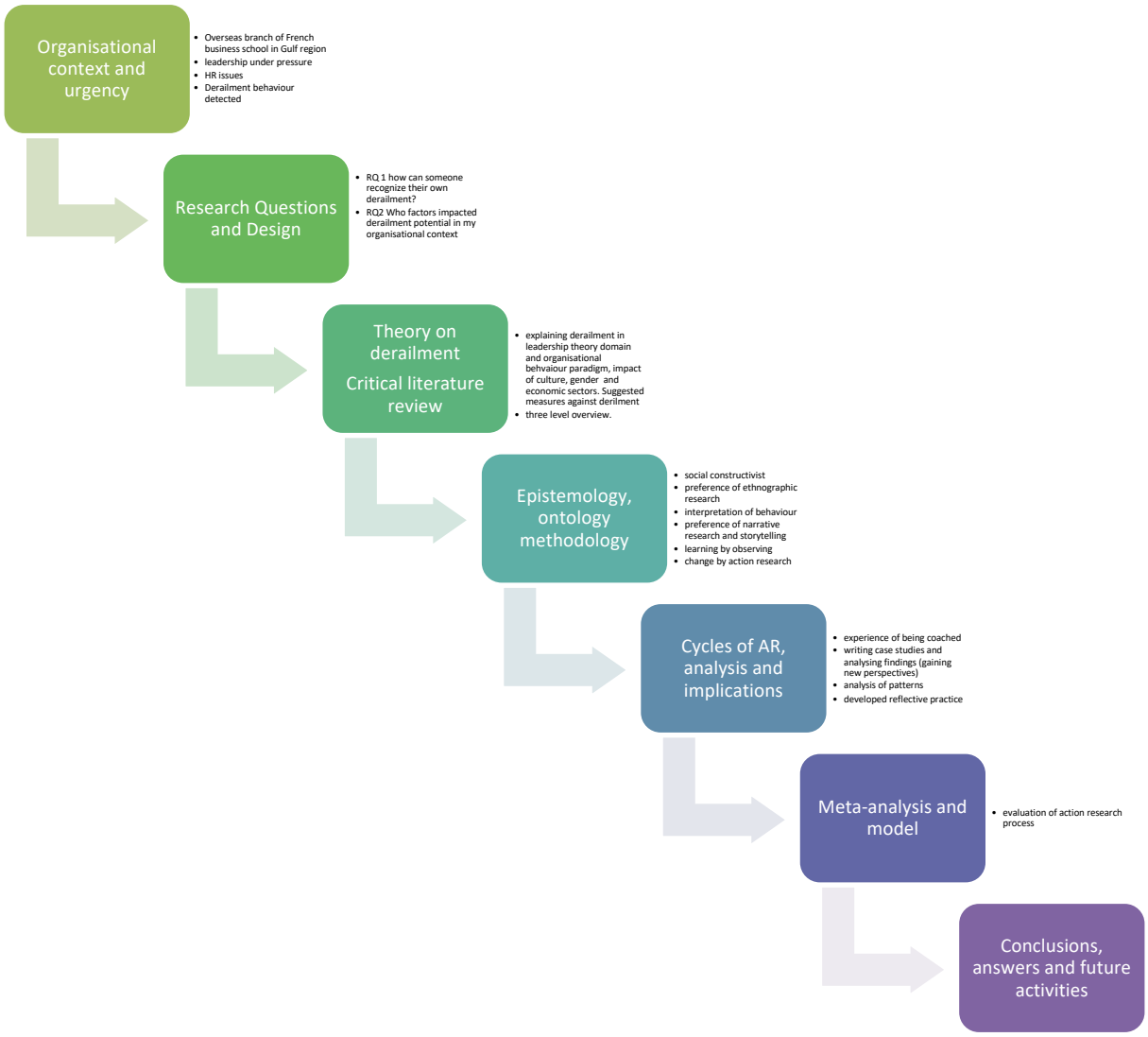


Figure 4: Summary of thesis navigation

CHAPTER 2: Critical Literature Review

2.1. Purpose

As the aim of the thesis is to come up with actionable knowledge and with concern for a wider impact than merely original knowledge creation, a focus on the application of research around the issue is equally important. This chapter therefore introduces and defines the existing and relevant theory on effective and dysfunctional leadership behaviour, narrowing down to the concept of derailment, closely related to studies on 'dark traits' (Hogan & Hogan, 2001) characteristics within the domain of organisational behaviour and business psychology.

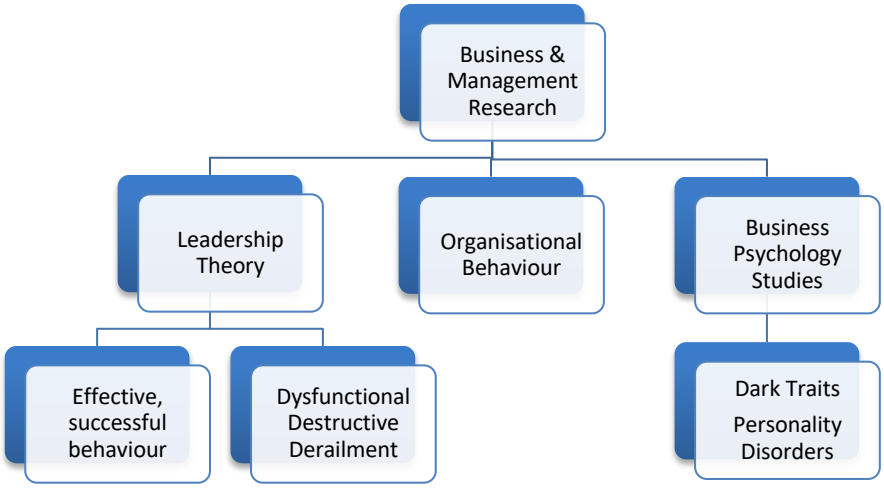


Figure 5: breakdown of theoretic framework

The intent of reviewing scholarly works and investigations is also to define the circumstances leading to potential career derailment by destructive behaviour and the suggested measurements against it. These concepts and recommended measurements eventually feed into a conceptual model, as introduced at the end of this chapter.

It is important to peel away all the layers affecting the complexity of destructive leadership behaviour and career derailment in order to propose a useful multi-level and multi-dimensional approach. A primary theoretical overview is presented explaining why and how derailment occurs and which treatments and measures are defined by scholars to treat derailment potential, based on conclusions from academic research. A secondary overview will show that measures against behaviours associated with derailment can be segmented as organisational, collaborative/collective and personal efforts. This multiple level approach is

used to ensure that a multi-dimensional framework is being researched and that the model proposed is based on rigour and relevance. From the theoretical overview, a conceptual framework is then proposed at the end of the chapter and explained in three dimensions.

2.2. Literature search

The search for literature started with investigations into historical and current notions of effective and appropriate leadership behaviour, then moving into the dark side of leadership behaviour including dysfunctional tendencies and associated personality disorders. The majority of sources were retrieved from the University of Liverpool online library using Discover to search through databases such as EBSCOhost, complemented by searches on Google Scholar and online journals. Other sources were handbooks and e-books that I had bought for personal use. Eventually, this investigation was narrowed down to the construct of derailment, while ignoring the abundance of scholarly works on train derailment.[2]

As mentioned, leadership behaviour is researched from an organisational behaviour (OB) and systems perspective as well as from a psychological perspective. Effective behaviour leading to organisational performance is measured and predicted as well as ineffective or undesirable behaviour leading to organisational risks and bad performance within the OB domain. Mostly large samples are being used, sometimes complemented by interviews (Gentry, 2007). Leadership behaviour studied from a business psychological paradigm requires insight in personality and its impact on people and processes (Kaiser et al, 2015). Measurement of leadership behaviour for example entails scoring of effective behaviours on a Likert scale, or by comparing detected personality types with the Axis II DSM clinical disorders, Myers-Briggs types (MBTI) or the Hogan Five Points scale (Hogan & Hogan 2001; Furnham & Crump, 2015). Besides publishing peer reviewed articles in academic journals, scholars publish frequently in popular non-academic management magazines about effective leadership behaviour, successful leaders, destructive leaders, bad performance, bullies at work, and so on. So, the topic of destructive leadership behaviour and associated dysfunctional tendencies and array of triggers leading to career derailment is being studied from an academic as well as from an experiential practical point of view. It would require an extensive study beyond this thesis research to find out whether the (public and academic) interest in leadership derailment

[2] In fact, preventing and analysing train derailment leads to interesting reads on efficiency, rail materials, maintenance, and monitoring.

increases when world and business leaders publicly derail or become destructive throughout history. This initial search in literature for a useful definition and description also entailed understanding of the phenomenon by crafting checklists and tables for later use.

After finding sufficient publications in order to come up with a sound definition, the literature search was narrowed down to sub themes relating to the organisational context of the researcher: higher education, globalisation of business education, derailment in academia, the impact of being an expat of leadership behaviour, leadership types within different cultures and continents, expectations of leadership behaviour across cultures and nationalities, female leadership behaviour as compared to male leadership behaviour, derailment studies of upper versus lower levels). After this review, the search focused on finding solutions and treatments. These recommendations were derived from original as well as recent studies. Unfortunately, most detection, treatment and prevention methods, despite being grounded in scientific research, have been commercialized to reach a larger audience (for example, by the Hogan company) and therefore academic publications mentioning their own taxonomy could be labelled as biased. As this thesis research does not have the objective of validating, replicating or dismissing these studies but is rather focusing on finding methods to understanding the researcher's own experiences and preventing future undesirable behaviour, their usability depends on the end result: do they give satisfactory insight in one's behaviour and response? Also, can it be used in sensemaking of the researcher's organisational context and investigation into her own behaviour? Finally, the literature search also entailed reading material on first person action research , autoethnography and storytelling to ensure that the research methodology would fit with the intended research objective. The below table gives an overview of the search:

Derailment definition and identification
Historical overview of leading research
Subthemes around organisational context
Solutions and treatments
Methodology (first person action research)

Figure 6: Table of search themes based on iterative process of projected action research

2.3 Historical overview of leading publications on derailment

When reviewing the literature on destructive leadership behaviour leading to career derailment it quickly becomes clear that there are a few scholars (and related schools of thought) that have been dominating academic research on the topic. Scholars agree that Bentz (1967, 1985, 1990) was the first to study a group of executives for 30 years who failed and had a few characteristics in common. Bentz (1990) noted that these failed executives were all very smart and socially competent, but that they failed because of a list of pertinent issues and flaws they had in common, such as poor relationship building. McCall & Lombardo (1983) replicated this study by interviewing 20 male executives and introduced the term 'derailment' for leaders who had a history of previous success, positive characteristics as well as a disrupted career in common. They distinguished 10 common issues and pointed out that most frequently insensitivity to others (such as demonstrating aggression or intimidation) was leading to derailment (p.6). Morrison et al (1987) repeated and extended the research by interviewing 25 female leaders and came up with similar results. Lombardo et al (1988) then extended their studies by using quantitative methods, hypothesizing that failed executives should have more dysfunctional tendencies than successful ones. They conducted assessments with 169 leaders, of which 83 had derailed, and these executives scored low on 8 scales. Two years later, the researchers duplicated this study with 300 managers by focusing on the formulation of negative traits such as an inability to lead a team or abrasiveness. As a response, Van Velsor & Leslie (1995) replicated Lombardo's study and extended their focus to Europe (whereas previous research had primarily been done on the North American continent). They compared their results in an extensive review and noted that many previously mentioned themes were related (p.66). All previously mentioned research findings have in common that derailed executives seem to be unable to form and lead a team, have issues with relationships (with boss or subordinates), are highly emotional or display high insensitivity to other people's feelings, are unable to think strategically and cannot adapt adequately to change and transition. Even though Van Velsor & Leslie (1995) extended their samples to a different part of the world, the original list of derailment behaviours had not been complemented afterwards. In consequent (mostly replication) studies this list would not be supplemented by new flaws, even though an emphasis on specific issues and characteristics would change and develop over time. Figure 7 provides with an overview.

Eventually, Gentry, Katz & Mc Feeter (2009) classify all derailment features into five final major dispositions (p.336):

1. ***Problems with interpersonal relationships*** *(cold, arrogant, insensitive, withdrawn);*
2. ***Difficulty leading a team*** *(staffing inability, bad teambuilding, conflict avoiding);*
3. ***Difficulty changing or adapting*** *(to different managerial style, or inability to learn);*
4. ***Failure to meet business objectives*** *(ambitious, not persistent, poor performance);*
5. ***Too narrow functional orientation*** *(not ready for next level, unable to take different role).*

After 1995 and in the early 2000s, leading publications on derailment studies were extended from the USA to Europe and Asia and started to focus on other aspects and factors, such as regional differences and gender differences. McCall & Hollenbeck (2002) studied a sample of global executives living and working in foreign cultures and discovered that the usual derailment behaviours were demonstrated, but with an emphasis on certain issues. They noticed that causes for derailment were sometimes paradoxical and opposing, concluding that what would work well in one culture or country would be disastrous in the other, meaning that working overseas requires high adaptability in order to be successful (p.6). Publications increased with regards to studies including derailed female executives - which is noteworthy because derailment studies until then primarily included male executives. Interestingly, Finkelstein (2003) attempted to generalize characteristics of derailed gender-neutral leaders and managers in his "seven habits of spectacularly unsuccessful people" (p. 238), even though these points do not differ greatly from Lombardo's publications as mentioned before. For example, Finkelstein (2003) lists a tendency to overestimating strength, an emphasis on personal interests ahead of company interests, arrogance, elimination of internal competition, ignoring operations and relying on outdated strategic and tactics, to name but a few.

A fairly recent leading scholar publishing on derailment is Gentry (2007, 2009), who has complemented derailment research by studying middle management and different kinds of professions and gender and shifted focus to other territories and continents than North America. Nevertheless, Gentry (2007)'s research sample in his large-scale study on European managers still existed for 80% out of male managers, 77% holding positions in upper-middle-level to top-level positions (p.300). This means that many studies on typical derailment

characteristics are primarily based on male samples and may very well not be readily applicable to female managers such as myself, except for the study by Morrison et al (1987) that was uniquely using samples of a few female executives.

In their book chapter, Hogan, Hogan & Kaiser (2010) summarize derailment research of the past fifty years as being consistent over time, organisations, cultures and gender, despite using different methodologies (p.559). They call for future research to 'ask which derailment factors matter most in which circumstances and why'(p.560) and conclude that Bentz' (1985) 'overriding personality defects' still seem to be a key issue in all studies on management failure.

The figure below gives an overview and summary of (mostly American) research on derailment behaviour and their conclusions until 2010: [3]

Authors	Bentz (1967, 1985, 1990)	McCall & Lombardo (1983)	Morrison et al (1987)	Lombardo et al (1988, 1990)	Van Velsor & Leslie (1995)	McCall & Hollenbeck (2002)	Gentry (2007, 2009)	Eichinger, Dai, Tang (2009)
Frequency or focus	Relationships, insensitivity, personality defect.	Insensitivity, inability to adapt or think strategically, relationship	Inability to adapt, poor relationships	Issues with development of subordinates and leading others and interpersonal relationships	Relationship issues and failures to meet business objectives	Adaptability	Willingness to improve Personality	Lack of EI and learning agility Feedback can predict derailment

Figure 7: Summary of derailment research findings regarding behavioural traits 1985-2010

One explanation for American research dominating leadership research could be a cultural difference in views on leadership itself in the 20th century. Hofstede (2011) has published extensively about the cultural and national dimensions in organisational behaviour and may give some clues. In North America, individual character and behaviour is important towards personal success and business performance, whereas in most Asian countries the individual (and their behaviour) means nothing compared to the collective. In Europe, the dimension is individual but also more socially focused, and in the Middle East one could assume that tribal

[3] On a critical note it must be mentioned that the most cited derailment detection peer reviewed articles in English are originating from American based academics related to either the Center for Creative Leadership, a research center comprising of leadership scholars, or the Hogan company, founded in 1987 to perform research and educate on personality assessment to improve performance, including derailment.

societies would accept more aggression and arrogance in order to avoid weakness. As McCall & Hollenbeck (2002) mention 'what worked splendidly in one culture could be a disaster in the next' (p.6). Finding out why American studies on derailment dominated early research in the 20th century could become an interesting future topic for study but will not be further explored.

When reviewing literature until 2010, research seems to develop itself from finding common factors for management failure towards distinguishing exclusive traits that help detect and diagnose a derailing executive or manager. Furnham et al (2012) critically posit that the issue with most derailment scholarly work (until then) was that it was sufficiently *descriptive* with regards to traits and behaviour but not necessary *explanatory*.

After 2010, derailment themed studies emphasized on its complexity and started focusing more on personality, and prevention or treatment of dysfunctional behaviour. Carson et al (2012) compare and connect previous several studies by Hogan and Lombardo to underline the complexity of derailment as well as demonstrating how traits develop over time from positive towards destructive behaviour. Despite being a helpful source for thesis research due to its extensive overview, it does not add anything new to the discourse besides complexity.

In order to form a deeper scientific understanding why derailment occurs and under which circumstances, recent studies originate from neuroscientific and psychological domains, as any scientific explanation of human behaviour comes with recommendations on how to deal with it and scholars agree that derailment is based on personality (disorder) in combination with issues with relationships (and human interaction) leading to bad performance. Emphasis on the role of personality in leadership behaviour and its impact on others are currently dominating in contemporary literature, as Kaiser et al (2015) confirm.

This investigation into personality disorders has been continued in Europe. Dutch academic Van Luijk (2014) attempts to explain the complexity of derailment behaviour by giving examples of derailed leaders and grounding explanations and analysis in behavioural science. He discusses research on empathy levels of cruel persons by British scholar Baron-Cohen (2011) in comparison to bad behaving and bullying (derailing) managers. Van Luijk (2014) reasons that the exemplary cases of derailed leaders he investigated proof that they show

little compassion to their 'victims' (p.56). This resonates with early findings on 'insensitivity' (Bentz, 1985; McCall & Lombardo, 1983). Van Luijk also connects derailed personalities to derailing management behaviour (p.60). His work demonstrates that personality models and behavioural science still inform and impact research into leadership behaviour by analysing derailed leaders.

Kaiser et al (2015) also stress that when investigating the underlying causes for derailment it is often observed that dysfunctional leaders are unable to manage their own behaviour and are not able respond effectively to their environment (p.56). They refer to the original observation by Bentz (1985) in terms of the common 'overriding personality defect' (idem). Therefore, the authors propose discourse on the ability to self-regulate, as managers who are aware of their own 'dark sides', a term introduced by Hogan in the late eighties develop positive techniques to manage their disruptive effects. This insight into self-regulation and self-leadership will be discussed further in this chapter.

Continuing the historical overview of derailment research, it has become clear how it can be characterized (issues with interpersonal relationships, inability to form a team, emotional and behavioural volatility towards insensitivity, bad performance) and also why it occurs (due to personality disorders and a lack of self-regulation). When derailment occurs will be discussed next. This dimension differs from how and why, as it implies circumstances and (triggers for) behaviour leading to a point of derailment in time. Personally, I have always been interested in the moment when people start to become destructive and dysfunctional, when they are unable to regulate their own behaviour any longer and start to impact people and performance.

First of all, Aasland et al (2010) investigated the prevalence of destructive leadership behaviour while Furnham (2010) distinguishes organisational causes for leadership derailment on top of personality disorders. Furnham's work will be discussed in more detail in another chapter, however in general he advises on one hand a transparent governance system where the dysfunctional leader is not able to work solitary or do their job independently and make decisions autonomously (in order to avoid dictatorship or a complete withdrawal), and on the other hand he suggests a proper induction or onboarding period for carefully selected

individuals in upper level positions. To summarize, the organisational context could trigger destructive and disruptive behaviour and therefore derailment can mostly be prevented.

In line with Furnham, Van Luijk (2014) also discusses the organisational foundation and business context in which derailed leaders thrive. Whereas derailed leadership often bears connotations with destructive executives in upper level positions, research into middle management roles by Kovach (1987) or Gentry (2009) emphasized on the executive transition during which careers of middle managers often derail with similar destructive impact on the organisation. It is the classic example of a talented and successful team member who receives promotion to department head or director and consequently fails to meet a new set of expectations (by not being able to form a team for example). It is important to make this distinction of derailment after promotion, or career derailment due to abuse of power.

2.4 Defining derailment as a construct

According to research, derailing executives, leaders and managers have a few characteristics in common. These flaws or traits have been quite consistent over time (Hogan et al, 2010). Most researchers tend to explain derailment from a pragmatic leadership paradigm, i.e. why leaders derail and how they can be rescued (Lombardo & Eichinger, 1989; Furnham, 2010). These publications explore different views on leadership that influence the behaviour and expectations of recently promoted high potentials, but only Lombardo also offers real case studies of attempts to rescue individuals. One could conclude from extensive review that it is very common amongst researchers to understand the *behavioural* impact of derailment. Other business researchers study the *financial* impact and the sunk costs of derailment, as derailment can become quite a costly affair due to the trail of destruction and bad strategic decisions within the company that require a lot of investment, combined with high selection and recruitment costs after executives leave the company (Finkelstein, 2003; Furnham 2010).

Hogan, Hogan & Kaiser (2010) summarized these costs as follows (p.555):

"When managers fail, it costs time and resources to replace them. Lombardo reported that, in 1985, two Fortune 500 organizations asked him for advice on preventing leadership failure. These organizations estimated the cost of a failed executive was $500,000. Adjusted for inflation, that figure is about $1 million in 2009. Similarly, a poll of senior human resource

executives estimated the cost of derailment to be between $750,000 and $1.5 million per senior manager. Another study estimated the cost of a failed executive to be as high as $2.7 million. These costs will grow as the talent pool shrinks. There are also hidden costs of bad management in the form of golden parachutes, lost intellectual and social capital, missed business objectives, and disengaged employees."

So, if nearly 50% of senior and top-level managers eventually get fired as the authors mention on the next pages, then many companies will face these sunken costs unless they act upon it in a timely manner. Similarly, when managers realize they are derailing, they could prevent further disaster from happening when they initiate preventive measures themselves, which I aim to investigate in this thesis.

Several studies imply that leadership derailment and dysfunctional behaviour affect the organisation on different levels. Hogan et al (2010) discovered that 75% of working adults rate their direct supervisor as the most stressful aspect of their job. In the same article, they also state that two-third of managers in senior positions eventually display derailment characteristics an 50% will be fired at some point. One could conclude from this that most employees will encounter a derailing boss at some point and that it is not a rare phenomenon. As a result, according to Leary et al (2013), an incompetent leader can greatly affect employee engagement and can disturb job satisfaction and may even contribute significantly to eventual employee burnout. One can conclude from these studies that the derailment of an individual (and especially someone in a leadership position) can become a very serious and potentially costly organisational problem. Still, derailment has long been viewed as a purely top-level problem, because the impact of leadership behaviour is more directly noticeable and visible than derailment on other levels. And perhaps, derailing lower level employees can be removed more easily from a company than a senior executive.

Detecting derailment characteristics accurately is therefore important. A fairly recent conclusion is that certain devastating behavioural traits, such as displaying problems with interpersonal relationships or experiencing difficulty changing and adapting, are not simply a lack of certain expertise or competencies (Carson et al, 2012; Gentry et al, 2015). Underlying are complex personality traits and behaviours, now widely used by leading organisational psychologists and researchers such as Robert and Joyce Hogan and Robert Kaiser to assess

leadership behaviour. Due to research in the domain of business psychology by Robert Hogan, certain 'dark traits' of a leader's personality were defined (Hogan & Hogan, 2001). Whereas Lombardo focused on the end result, being derailment and avoiding costly resignation, other scholars such as Carson and Hogan focused more on understanding the dysfunctional *tendencies* and underlying negative characteristics of leaders and managers that have a devastating impact on the organisation. This dark side of one's personality has been exploited by Hogan's company that offers assessments and consultancy to well-known organisations in order for them to detect the rotten fruit and act upon it. Even though their foundation is solid, their assessments also require attention by specialists in order to avoid biased assumptions and flawed generalizations or conclusions about the behaviour of certain leaders. Therefore, I find Carson et al (2012)'s overview and comparison very useful, as it does not limit to one school of thought and emphasizes on complexity. Throughout the article it is stressed that traits develop over time, even though not all scholars observe the same. The authors explain that some short-term strengths may eventually transform into long term weaknesses. But the moment of time when it occurs and why cannot be concluded from research. The triggers to behavioural change into dark traits remain unspecific and therefore it is interesting to view studies into positive traits, i.e. what does a successful leader do to stay on track, and why they do not derail?

Lombardo & Echinger (1989) researched the impact of bad role modelling and the way decision makers effectively develop themselves as a foundation for derailment. They observed that high potentials rely too much on their strengths and therefore become weaker in others, and become frustrated over time, leading to destructive behaviour. In this train of thought, Robert Kaplan defended derailed executives in the book 'Beyond Ambition: How Driven Managers Can Lead Better and Live Better' (1991), by claiming that in fact many derailed executives become victims of their own success, as their previously positive traits and drive for success eventually became their downfall. Subsequently he gave advice on how these executives could change *themselves,* based on increased self-reflection and heightened self-awareness. I distinguish this urgency to reflect on one's own behaviour to transform a downward spiral into an upward motion, and change destructive tendencies into constructive behaviour, as one of the first steps of the derailment prevention process on an individual level.

Recently, there have been more scholarly attempts to link personality variables to potential derailment behaviours. This synthesis is positively contributing to understanding the complexity of the problem. Both positive as well as negative traits and characteristics have been studied in relation to derailment behaviour. An interesting paradoxical conclusion from these more recent studies is that 'desirable' traits such as extroversion and conscientiousness were quite often present in derailing managers. According to Hogan & Hogan (2001), as reviewed by Carson et al (2012), early dysfunctional tendencies may even predict future derailment behaviours, such as being excitable, cautious, leisurely, imaginative, indecisive, or even highly accommodating and compliant, with a distinction between short term and long-term weaknesses. According to Carson et al (2012), people who display these early positively viewed tendencies, such as being extremely hard-working and detail oriented, are more likely to resist change or avoid decision making or struggle to build teams and will be behaving exclusively or aggressively over time.

See the below table, Figure 8, showing the complexity of relating personality traits and weaknesses to dysfunctional behaviours and the rigour of Carson's study:

Table 2 Hogan 's dysfunctional interpersonal tendencies (Hogan and Hogan 2001; Hogan and Kaiser 2005)

Horney's (1950) taxonomy	Dysfunctional interpersonal tendency	Definition	Short-term strengths	Long-term weaknesses
Moving away from people	Excitable	Difficult to please; often moody; short-lived excitement for new endeavors or people	Energy and enthusiasm	Outbursts and emotional volatility
	Skeptical	Doubtful of other's intentions; cynical, distrustful	Insightful about organizational politics	Mistrustful; vindictive and litigious
	Cautious	Hesitant to try new things for fear of negative outcomes, including rejection of failure	Makes few mistakes	Indecisiveness and risk averse
	Reserved	Little interest in the feelings of others; aloof and detached	Tough and resolute under pressure	Uncommunicative and insensitive to morale issues
	Leisurely	Independent; disregarding the request of others; becoming easily irritated if they persist	Charming with good social skills	Passive aggressive meanness
Moving against people	Bold	Exceedingly self-confident; overestimates one's abilities; feelings of entitlement	Courage, confidence, and charisma	Unable to admit mistakes; sense of entitlement
	Mischievous	Tendency toward risk-taking and excitement-seeking; manipulative, deceitful, and exploitative	Willing to take risks; charming	Lying; defying rules and authority; exploiting others
	Colorful	Dramatic and animated; desire to be the center of attention	Entertaining, flirtatious, and engaging	Impulsive, attention-seeking, management by crisis
	Imaginative	Distractible and unpredictable; idiosyncratic; behaving in odd or unusual ways	Visionary out-of-the-box thinking	Fanciful, over the top vision; erratic decision making
Moving toward people	Diligent	Inflexible; tendency toward perfectionism, critical of other's performance	Hard working, high standards; self-sacrificing	Over controlling, rigid, micromanaging
	Dutiful	Agreeable and eager to please; reluctant to act independently or speak out against others	Team player, considerate; keeps boss informed	Indecisive; overly concerned about pleasing superiors

Figure 8: Table 2 from Carson et al (2012)

By carefully studying this overview of dysfunctional tendencies in relation to short term strengths that initially define high potential leaders (from Carson et al, 2012; p. 295), one could conclude that being aware of one's positive traits and the possible triggers that may lead to derailment hypothetically should increase the opportunity to change one's behaviour before it is too late. For example, a manager whose short-term strengths are energy and enthusiasm, and who is viewed as an excitable person, may become difficult to please and sometimes even quite moody, with outbursts of emotional volatility, and eventually could even move away from people (p.295). Another example is of a leader who appears very confident and bold, whose positive traits are their charisma and courage, but who because of their sense of entitlement will be unable to admit mistakes (idem).

It is important to realise, with regards to the ability to recognize the early stages of derailment, that people do have a flawed perception on how they see themselves and how others see them (Gentry et al, 2007). There are indeed some noted discrepancies between self- and observer-ratings in terms of (leadership) behaviour (idem). In fact, one could conclude from various studies that probably many professionals comfortably assume that *others* derail, and that they do not, or that *others* are to blame for their inability to perform well after promotion. This implies that even when managers become aware of the risk of their own leadership derailment, this does not mean that they would follow through in effectively acting against it, such as seeking help. Practically, it seems that leaders and managers should really be able to receive useful tools and learn specific skills that deal with the problem pragmatically and from different domains: on an individual, team and organisational level. However, derailment within management education is generally a 'practice of single-loop learning', especially when making conclusions about *others* (Argyris & Schon, 1974). As my career is rooted in management education, I find it important to stimulate reflective practice to analyse and change one's own behaviour instead of just knowing what the characteristics are.

According to Chappelow & Leslie (2000), it is possible to keep a career headed in the right direction if managers are aware of both negative influences as well as indicators for success and that they are also able to assess themselves honestly in terms of their leadership skills. This implies that a combination between reflective practice, critical thinking and awareness of

positive and negative indicators is indeed crucial. They highlight the characteristics indicating *effective* leaders as follows: establishes strong relationships; hires, builds and successfully leads teams; has an outstanding track record of performance; adapts and develops during transitions. Interestingly, in reverse these are characteristics of derailing leaders such as betraying trust and resisting change, as described by Lombardo (1983, 1989). It is however crucial to understand that, according to Gentry et al (2009), the *absence* of negative behavioural indicators does not necessary result in good performance or being a successful leader. Hogan et al (2009) conclude therefore that there is a better consensus amongst scholars on what negative behaviour entails than what successful management is.

Carson et al (2012) adopted an elaborate approach to empirically measure whether expectations towards derailment behaviour could lead to involuntary or voluntary resignations. They investigated the relationship between dysfunctional interpersonal tendencies, derailment potential behaviours, and actual turnover caused by derailment using a sample of high-level managers working for different global organisations. This study relates closely to my case, as it seemed that the high employee turnover rates in my organisation were directly linked to dysfunctional leadership behaviour and conflicting management styles.

Their results improved comprehension of why high-level managers may derail and how behaviours that indicate derailment potential may relate to actual involuntary or voluntary exit from the organisation and derailment, because they found a correlation between behaviours associated with derailment potential, dysfunctional tendencies and involuntary or voluntary resignations. Their study showed the importance of understanding the complexity of leadership behaviour, while seeing this in the context of the organisation and antecedents (behavioural tendencies displayed earlier on in their life).

Zhang et al (2013) agree that derailment 'may be caused by individual inadequacies such as personality flaws or underdeveloped skills' (p.96). They argue that high-potential managers early in their careers get promoted because they are hard-working, enthusiastic, charming, or pressure resistant, but derail later on because expectations change within the organisation, or flaws previously overlooked become more visible as the demands of the organisation change. Therefore, the organisation needs to be actively involved in preventing derailment and keeping potential derailing managers on track. Derailment is not just a result of a difficulty

with interpersonal relationships or resistance to change; in fact, there are many underlying factors influencing derailment potential. Also, actively preventing the risk of derailment may prove to be crucial in retaining talented employees.

In short, derailment is a complex, multi-layered, behavioural and organisational issue. Originally, derailment was thought to be the result of a difficulty in interpersonal relationships and behavioural flaws or dark traits, and assumingly existed only on an executive level. Later research focused more on the development of destructive, dysfunctional tendencies in seemingly high-potential, successful leaders and the impact on the rest of the organisation. It seemed that those individuals who over-relied on their strengths struggled more with uncertain times and conflicting management styles in complex, changing organisations. Besides a lack of flexibility, derailing managers also seem to lack accurate reflective practice and critical self-awareness. To conclude, researchers agree that derailment potential behaviours should always be considered company *and* individual specific, meaning that the organisational culture and specific individual expectations of managers may both lead to persistent derailment behaviours. One could derive from this that measures against derailment are hard to generalize in an academic sense.

From almost forty years of research into derailment, two conclusions can be drawn: 1) preventing or treating this problem requires an exploration into the behaviour of individuals (and how this behaviour impacts others), and 2) an assessment of the changes is necessary on individual, collective and organisational levels.

Figure 9 demonstrates the conclusions of Lombardo, categorized on three levels:

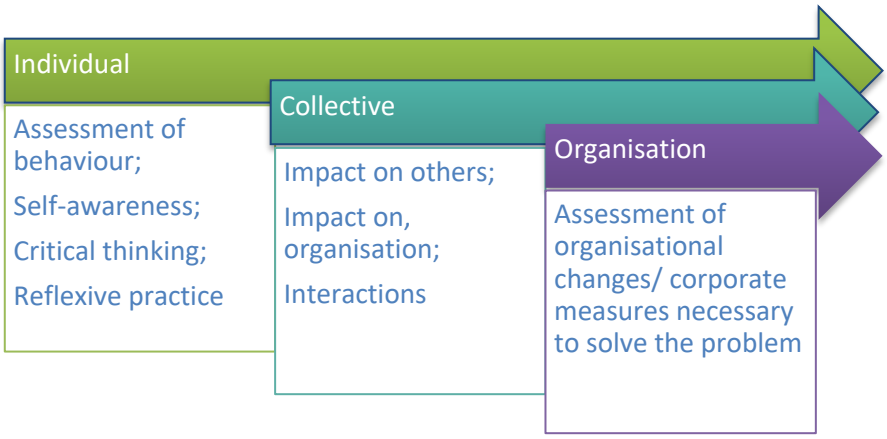


Figure 9: Scopes – early exploration into derailment in relation to different spheres of influence

As can be concluded from by Carson et al (2012), attempts to rescue oneself require behavioural changes based on critical reflection and introspection, while taking the organisational context of the potential derailed into account. From a wider organisational perspective, however, prevention or treatment of derailment requires a more systematic management of change, with planned activities and strategic executive decisions around development and exposure, as can be concluded from the works of Lombardo & Eichinger (1989) and Furnham (2010).

In the upcoming paragraphs I intend to go deeper into the influencing factors of derailment in order to understand which measures can be taken to solve the problem. The review starts with expectations on appropriate leadership behaviour that form obstacles during self-development, then moves on to the practice of self-leadership and coaching and ends with the impact of (company) culture and gender on the emergence of derailment. These are all aspects to be aware of during self-reflection, self-detection and taking action, as can be concluded at the end of the section.

2.4.1 Managing expectations of the self: leadership identity and self-awareness

According to Lombardo and Eichinger (1989), individual and organisational views regarding professional identity can truly create obstacles for desired personal transformation, after one signals negative behavioural traits. Pre-conceived ideas about managerial competency and what leadership is, or which style should be used to engage others, affect positive and negative behaviours of both leaders and their subordinates. For example, in reference to

becoming an 'authentic leader', as Goffee & Jones (2017) explained, the misconception of many professionals today is that authenticity means to be oneself in all circumstances and being 'real', whereas leaders who are perceived as authentic leaders in reality are quite often more skilled at adapting themselves to the situation and organisation. Various recent studies indicated that leaders who mistakenly think they should first and foremost behave as fearsome, commanding and demanding, as opposed to being compassionate, motivating and stimulating, will encounter demotivated and disengaged staff members. This display of authoritative behaviour leads eventually to a decrease in organisational performance, according to Cuddy, Kohut, & Neffinger (2013). This type of behaviour however can be observed in derailing leaders. Therefore, good examples of leadership competency seem to be crucial.

According to Gentry et al (2007), there is a strong focus on leadership strengths obscuring the notion that leadership weaknesses do exist, which in turn can increase derailment (Lombardo, Rudermann & McCauley, 1988). A strength-only perspective is therefore simplistic and misguided (Kaiser, 2009). It has become clear that leaders, independent of their industry, are under a lot of pressure to perform well as they are expected to optimize their team and to motivate others, by being engaged and remaining their authentic self, while also ensuring that the company is thriving economically and financially. It should be expected that leaders have kept up with the latest theory and findings on effective leadership behaviour while also having the ability to reflect upon their own leadership style and possessing a willingness to adapt. This could lead to frustration and leaders can develop a difficulty with interpersonal relationships. And a noticeable difficulty with interpersonal relationships is one of the primary characteristics of derailing, dysfunctional executives, according to Lombardo (1983).

2.4.2 Notions of leadership affecting leadership behaviour

As derailment theory has become embedded into the leadership studies paradigm throughout the past forty years, multiple existing notions concerning what leadership is or should be will be discussed in this paragraph, as these concepts may very well influence the constructed idea of appropriate behaviour by senior managers or those promoted into leadership roles. Scholars agree that tensions can develop, and conflicts can arise within organisations, especially when expectations are not met or not aligned. Becoming aware of the fact that

views on leadership hugely changed and developed in the past two hundred years helps to understand that quite a few differences exist throughout generations. Therefore, the historical conceptual development of leadership theory and the published and widespread views of modern management gurus must influence each recently promoted high-potential manager. Leadership ideas have impact in terms of expectations when promoted to a new role (and of course, also influences the expectations of one's own superiors). A new leader therefore needs to inquire into the ideas of their organisation, and their superiors, regarding leadership, and reflect on their own views and professional identity. Comstock (2016) argues that leadership is currently often seen as a strong ability to guide, persuade, or motivate others as head of a group or organization. The popular modern leadership paradigm contrasts with classical 'heroic' leadership assumptions. It was a widely accepted idea that true leaders were born or even blessed with certain characteristics and possessed an innate charisma (Carlyle, 1841). Because this was an accepted concept, some researchers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries wanted to understand why some men (because it was a male dominated profession) appeared to lead naturally while others seemingly preferred to follow. Accordingly, it became significant to explore whether those acclaimed followers eventually could also become leaders by education or experience. Therefore, in the early 19th century, leadership theory was based on social and psychological studies, providing with descriptions of effective leadership and follower behaviour. During the interbellum, Kurt Lewin (1939) openly criticized the autocratic perspective that was widely accepted amongst scholars at the time. He became one of the first researchers to describe a variety of styles. Ground-breaking at the time, Lewin suggested a more participative leadership style, which was not inborn by definition and therefore could be developed and learned over time. Despite his efforts, the construct of charismatic leadership including the romanticized idea of heroic leaders and docile followers as introduced by Meindl et al (1985) and further investigated by Conger et al (2000) is still widely adopted, even after a whole century of published research with opposing conclusions with regards to distributed leadership within organisations (Cannatelli et al, 2017).

Historically, derailment theory emerged in the late seventies and eighties, when the view on leadership in society also changed. In the light of Nixon and Watergate, of Thatcher and Raegan, and cult leaders, but also anarchy and the punk movement, it is a logical step to start

investigating the flaws and destructive nature of some leaders (Lyubovnikova et al, 2015). In other words, the social construct or 'myth' of leadership shifted throughout the years and corresponded with the (historic and social) reality it existed in (Gemmill & Oakley, 1992; p.114). An example if the shift from autocratic, directive and transactional leadership to democratic, transformational styles. It has become less of an individual activity, as Raelin (2003) posits.

Charismatic and heroic leadership is still promoted by successful business leaders who are publishing inspiring books and organising workshops. It is often referred to as the so-called guru driven leadership theory. These so-called gurus affect managerial and professional identity, especially in terms of popular ideas on effective leadership (Husczynski, 2006). Management guru theory, as discussed and researched by Clark & Salaman (1998) is 'the presentation of ambitious claims to transform managerial practice, organizational structures and cultures and, crucially, organisational performance, through the recommendation of a fundamental almost magical cure or transformation that rejects the past, and reinvents the organization, its employees, their relationships, attitudes and behaviour' (p. 138). They mention that guru theory has become its own paradigm within management science. Scientific evidence on the impact of guru theory as an example of best practices is very limited. According to Clark & Salaman, management gurus create an illusion of possessing authoritative and guiding knowledge, but in fact this knowledge cannot be derived from any theoretical empirical foundation; therefore, their recommendations are highly ambiguous. Nevertheless, their strategic models and recommendations influenced many executives in the 1980s and 1990s and led to many organisational transformations based on ideas such as matrix organisation, leading by doing/walking around, total quality management, and many more (p.138). Alongside publications by successful business leaders, the focus in academic research also shifted to motivating and understanding others in order to become most effective as a team and organisation.

Situational Leadership Theory as introduced by Hersey & Blanchard (1977) in the 1960 and 1970s and later revisited by Thompson & Vecchio (2009) is a leadership theory aimed at motivating and engaging employees by adopting an appropriate management style. According to the researchers, individual management styles should really be adapted to the levels of

'subordinate maturity'. In other words, adopting a transformative, participative leadership style does not suffice in each situation and context. In some situations, Hersey & Blanchard argue, a more task oriented, directive leadership style is preferred above a goal oriented, participatory leadership style. For example, employees at a conveyor belt need to know their tasks and time to complete these tasks, and do not require an explanation of the purpose of their role in the bigger picture. In my organisation, looking at the repetitive routine tasks of most employees in combination of culture bias (Hofstede, 1999) probably motivated top leadership to adopt a directive, transactional style across the branch.

Criticism towards the situational leadership theory is based upon the lack of empirical evidence for this theory and the ambiguity surrounding the conceptual definition of follower development level (Thompson & Vecchio, 2009). However, outside of the community of scholars who actively study leadership, SLT is less critically viewed (e.g., in management training programs and in school-teacher training settings), according to the authors. Specifically, the theory is still being offered during training programs, as it is well-known and commonly used during leadership training. Also, SLT is easily understood, attractive, and seemingly applicable to a wide range of leadership settings. Furthermore, SLT is distinctly prescriptive in nature (whereas other leadership approaches are comparatively more descriptive) and offers guidelines for interpersonal relations. Related to the prescriptive guidance of SLT is the inherent recognition that there is no single universal style of leadership that is best for all circumstances and it 'emphasizes the value of (a) understanding subordinates in terms of differential readiness for taking greater responsibility and (b) developing the skill-set of followers' (idem, p.838). Situational leadership theory is quite familiar amongst leaders. As suggested by Thompson & Vecchio (2009), its pitfall however is a misjudgement of an employee's level of maturity or a plateauing of management style towards employees or overanalysing staff behaviour. This may even result in the application of an incorrect style, with negative and irreparable outcomes.

Since the turn of the 20th century, and especially in the last decade, there has also been an increased focus on moral leadership due to the failing examples of global leaders (Lyubovnikova et al, 2015). Popular leadership authors such as Bill George and Kevin Cashman were among the first to request for a new type of genuine and values-based leadership in

2003: authentic leadership (Gardner et al, 2011). However, since gaining in popularity, there has been some conceptual ambiguity between scholars, educators and practitioners around the meaning of authentic leadership. Gardner et al (2011) provide with an extensive overview of the variety in definitions around authenticity and authentic leadership, which implies that the concept is still in development and that ideas around authentic leadership are not definitive. Other scholars criticize the leader-centred approach towards authenticity as it is a quality that is mainly attributed by followers (Goffee & Jones, 2006, 2017). The authors also stress that 'leadership demands the expression of an authentic self', meaning that research has shown that people nowadays want to be led by 'someone real' (p.57) instead of a polished leader who adopts the style of a successful management guru or other hero. According to their study, leaders and followers both associate authenticity with sincerity, honesty and integrity (Goffee & Jones, 2006). However, they posit, the concept of authenticity is often misunderstood by many - as it is widely assumed that authenticity is an innate quality, whereas it is really a quality that others must attribute to you as a person (Goffee & Jones, 2017; p.57). So, authenticity is largely defined by how others perceive you and so leaders themselves can control it.

Goffee & Jones (2017) further observe that people who exercise no control over the expression of their authentic selves get into trouble very quickly when they move into leadership roles. It is very difficult to find a balance between expressing their personalities and managing those of the people they aspire to lead or influence (p.58). The ability to strike that balance and to preserve one's authenticity is what distinguishes great leaders from others, according to Goffee & Jones (2017). Their advice is to try to be authentic as a leader, but to carefully choose which aspects of the authentic self are indeed relevant to the given situation to avoid personality clashes and insecurities (p.59). However, one should be resilient enough to avoid the 'authenticity paradox' (Ibarra, 2015) - when learning about authenticity can actually limit the growth and impact of leaders due to a 'rigid self-concept'. In other words, it is advised by the authors to avoid pretending to be someone else and also not showing one's complete authentic self when it does not match the personalities of the environment.

More recently, the leadership theory paradigm shifted towards democratic, transformational, inclusive forms (Raelin, 2003). Self-leadership has become a relevant focus of attention amongst professionals and practitioners in relation to derailment prevention (Neck, 2009) and will be discussed in the next paragraph.

2.4.3 Discovering and developing self-leadership

Despite its early introduction in the 1980s by Manz (1986), the interest within management research into self-leadership could be the consequence of an increased awareness around emotions and the impact of multiple interactions in an organisational context. This concept included 'the self-management of immediate behaviours' (p.589) and in addition, was similar to the notion of double loop learning by Argyris & Schon (1974). According to Neck (2006; p.271), self-leadership is a normative or prescriptive model of empowering employees and is based upon a framework of self-regulation and having a developed sense of who you are, what you can do and where you are going combined with the ability to influence your communication, emotions and behaviours on the way to getting there. Manz et al (2016) also recently investigated intentional self-influence of emotion in the workplace. Self-leadership is in this context is described as 'a self-influenced process involving a comprehensive set of prescriptive strategies that help individuals develop the self-direction and self-motivation necessary to perform effectively in the workplace' (p. 376). Criticism towards self-leadership is that relatively few empirical studies have been examining self-leadership in organizational settings and it is hard to distinguish from other self-motivational concepts such as self-regulation (Neck, 2006; p.274).

Similar key elements mentioned in leading derailment prevention studies are heightened self-awareness (Gentry, 2007), and mindfulness (Seiling & Hinrichs, 2005). Self-awareness and mindfulness have an obvious relationship with the individual reflective study during action research as explained by Coghlan & Brannick (2010). This type of individual reflective action research resonates with the dominant methodology of my own research into derailment prevention measures and will be addressed in more detail during the methodology chapter. In first person, introspective action research, the practitioner is engaged in a study to improve their own professional practice and is also simultaneously involved in a meta-analysis of self-reflection, examining one's own assumptions in action and learning about his or herself as

events unfold (p.106). Marshall (1999) describes this type of individual reflective practice as an inquiry into the inner and outer circles of attention, participating in cycles of reflection while at the same time being active and receptive. Marshall's publications have been an inspiration throughout my doctoral studies, as her methodology combines storytelling with academic double and triple-loop learning (Argyris & Schön, 1974; Flood & Romm, 2018), which has always informed my choices of methodology such as case study writing and narrative research.

2.4.4 Coaching during self-reflective practice and insider action research

When a person dives into an introspective journey of self-reflection to answer questions (thereby applying a type of first-person action research) or change behaviour, some form of coaching or guidance is advised by Nelson & Hogan (2009). The researchers recommend that one should appoint an executive coach when investigating behavioural change, a coach being a professional who can safeguard and supervise the thought processes in order to avoid thought paralysis, by applying guided reflection. Nelson & Hogan collected data and reviewed publications to uncover that coaching generally does indeed help executives become more effective leaders. Coaching can therefore be suggested for different reasons. The authors found that senior executives within an organisation may identify a specific individual who is at risk for derailment (or an already derailing executive whose distortive interpersonal style may be the reason for referral), or coaching could be part of a preventive strategic programme for all senior leaders and high-potential middle managers who may be at risk at a later stage (p.10). The kind of personal guidance and coaching with the aim to answer an urgent question (or dilemma) or to accomplish a behavioural change requires specific knowledge and skills. According to Witherspoon (2014), coaches can facilitate the ability of leaders to change their behaviour effectively by reflecting, reframing and redesigning in action or immediately after key events. Coaching typically reflects on action and behaviour and stimulates reframing as a means to change the client's actions leading to better results. Coaching therefore facilitates double loop learning which requires an examination and change in underlying assumptions, values and beliefs to discover and correct errors (Argyris & Schon, 1974; Witherspoon, 2014). Single-loop learning is candid and concentrates for example on actions and their direct outcomes rather than the thinking that led to these actions in the first place. Coaching in a single loop, Witherspoon argues, only helps to improve performance and focuses on

understanding the impact of one's own actions, which is easily overlooked by derailing leaders (who typically can be self-absorbed and self-centred, as distinguished earlier by Michael Lombardo). Witherspoon therefore introduces double-loop coaching, or *DLC*, as an innovative approach through three practices: reflecting, reframing, and redesigning (p.262). Reflecting, reframing and redesigning are also core elements of action research (Coghlan & Brannick, 2010). Coaching with action learning elements could thus be viewed as an acceptable framework for insider action research that is focused on bringing about behavioural change (Witherspoon & White, 1997).

According to Kauffman & Hodgetts (2016), executive coaches should be familiar with multiple psychological models and techniques in order to be effective and adaptive, which is called model agility (p.157). These different models are defined as cognitive behavioural, psychoanalytic, positive psychology and adult development. This is especially helpful when a manager is in the middle of a crisis and needs guidance, like me when I was on the verge of derailing my career and was heading towards (in)voluntary resignation. It may assist in avoiding the repetition of past patterns (undesirable behaviours) that are potentially destructive (p.158).

To summarize, introspection and (self-)reflective practice are important measurements during attempts to prevent or treat derailing leaders. Reflection and introspection with the assistance of an executive coach can be ordered strategically as a part of organisational leadership development, or those at risk may decide for themselves to start the practice with or without the help of a professional. I therefore posit that Kauffman & Hodgetts' recommendation regarding the application of multiple models during coaching combined with Witherspoon's double-loop learning is most effective. Self-leadership can then become a prescriptive model supported by the whole organisation based on exemplary behaviour from senior executives.

2.4.5 Company culture affecting derailment

When I worked and lived in Qatar, my superiors often mentioned infamous management gurus and popular writers such as Peter Drucker and Stephen Covey - and therefore sent all employees to their workshops such as the Seven Habits training. Some scholars still find them relevant, such as Chung (2013) and Rehman & Nasir (2016). Logically, these popular ideas had

implications on expectations of effective leadership behaviour in my work environment between 2010 and 2016. In Qatar, there has always been a very strong emphasis on becoming or being a strong leader, as can be derived from the Qatar National Vision 2030[4]. This emphasis means that in this already hierarchal tribal society (Hofstede, 2011) the pressure is extra high on high potential professionals in the GCC region (Williams et al, 2011; Vora, 2014). Due to a *Qatarization* law (i.e. the distribution of local human resources across mid to senior management levels) many local high-potential managers rapidly climbed the corporate ladder, often replacing successful an experienced expatriate professional. Considering that high potentials feeling performance pressure are more likely to derail at a later stage according to Lombardo & Eichinger (1989), one could posit hypothetically that in Qatar the risk of mass leadership derailment could be looming in the near future. The business school I worked for taught transformational, participative and inclusive leadership to both locals as well as expatriates - even though internally the idea of effective leadership practice seemed to be the opposite (transactional, directive, hierarchal and non-inclusive). In order to place this derailment study even further in its context, it must be noted that within my workplace, aggressive, fear-inducing behaviour was an accepted leadership method for achieving results, despite being educated about the risks of such destructive behaviour. Furthermore, senior executives avoided any attempts to recognise dark traits in themselves (Furnham et al, 2012). Also, many colleagues were refusing to admit to their own mistakes or taking one for the team, probably out of fear for emotional outbursts from their superiors.

The distant and aggressive behaviour of leadership was regularly discussed amongst subordinates in middle management and below; however, it seemed that no one felt the urge to take action. All the managers who had resigned in the past few years (or were fired) either had encountered a conflict with their superiors or were observing conflicting behavioural issues within management themselves. Due to the habit of blaming others for organisational issues, a status quo had been reached. Staff development and promotion in the company rarely occurred, which made many colleagues, including me, frustrated, disengaged and demotivated towards management who, in their turn, interpreted this lack of motivation and

[4] Qatar National Vision 2030: http://www.mdps.gov.qa/en/qnv1/pages/default.aspx [viewed: 11 April 2017)

negative atmosphere as the direct result of a group gossip and silo mentality (Stone, 2004). High potentials were not promoted and therefore dysfunctional behaviour occurred without derailing careers. The incapability or perhaps unwillingness of leadership to listen and respond effectively to organisational issues became a vicious circle in our organisation (Masuch, 1985). From the staff members' point of view, it was rather a form of organisational silence (Morrison & Milliken, 2000) combined with tribalism in middle and upper management (McGee-Cooper, 2005).

Assuming that derailing managers are unable to pay attention to the impact of their behaviour on their subordinates and colleagues, the act of adopting organizational silence (sometimes interpreted as gossip when the upper layer is not involved in the staff discussion of the ailments of the company) may have an even more devastating effect on self-reflection regarding one's own derailment potential. As Morrison & Milliken (2000) discuss, there are many organizations intolerant for dissent and that employees are afraid to speak up resulting in withholding of information about problems. Organizational silence occurs, according to the authors, by collective sense-making dynamics during which the notion develops that communicating upwards is unwise (p.706). Furthermore, they find it interesting that this phenomenon can even take place in a time when 'management rhetoric focuses on empowerment and more open lines of communication' (p.707). One important factor that they assume stimulates organisational silence is the fear of getting negative feedback, especially from subordinates. (p. 708). This fear for criticism may be especially strong among leaders and they will tend to avoid any information that might suggest weakness or that might raise questions about current courses of action (idem). According to the authors, research has shown that when criticism comes from lower levels, it is viewed as being incorrect or untrue and seen as more threatening to one's authority and reliability. And because of these ideas about employees, leaders will not accept negative feedback or concerns about their own potential derailment behaviour from people who report into them, or who are being viewed as on a lower level.

Various researchers have asserted that these personal and professional values and beliefs held by leaders are closely related to how they behave (Thomas, Dickson, & Bliese, 2001). Badarracco (1992) distinguished four spheres of a leader's morality and values that impact

their decision making, where personal moral values may differ from or even be in contrast with the company's values. This implies that in a certain company a manager may have to make a decision that goes against their perceived authentic self, thereby acting in a manner that is perceived as unethical or going against the group's or their own core emotions. Therefore, when professionals are trying to come to a full description of who they really are by investigating their personality, distinguishing personal values from professional ones can be challenging and confronting. Derailing managers may have acted in ways that were seen as essential in certain circumstances and would not act in a similar way in different organisations.

This characteristic of not wanting to admit mistakes and creating disengagement from subordinates is typical for derailing executives, according to Lombardo & Eichinger (1989). In other words, untreated and unrecognized derailment behaviour of executives, especially the alienation that is created, affects not just their subordinates or company finances but has an impact on the whole organisation and may even lead to organisational silence. Therefore, understanding the context of derailing managers is just as impactful as exploring personality traits and triggers. In the next paragraph, the focus moves from the individual to the organisational context.

2.4.6 Leadership & derailment in academia

As the organisational context of this doctoral thesis is set in higher education and academia, it is also important to understand whether differences in leadership styles and perceptions exist in comparison to the business sector, in relation to derailment. According to Temple & Ylitalo (2009), higher education institutes are currently facing major challenges due to a demanding external environment that require their traditional views on leadership to be rethought and reviewed. Higher education institutes are required to participate in global and regional markets in order to remain competitive while, unless commercial organisations, also striving to sustain academic values and create new knowledge (Henkel, 2002; p.30). This demands changes on the institutional level in terms of adopting business models and different leadership styles. However, developing leadership competency has traditionally not received a lot of attention within academic institutions. Traditional leadership styles and perceptions are dominant in strongly hierarchal academic institutions (Lipman-Blumen, 1996). In many

cases, working in a managerial role has also not been something that faculty members were looking forward to, due to the pressure to be first among equals (Strathe & Wilson, 2006). The administrative roles had therefore not really been appreciated among academic professionals and were often seen as an unwelcome interruption to lecturing and research careers, according to research by Temple & Ylitalo (2009). In the academic world, as investigated by Strathe & Wilson (2006), ending up in an authority position differs from the way people become leaders in business contexts. In a higher education institute, ending up in a leadership role is to be seen as a temporary distraction inside a business context, because climbing to a higher administrative level is quite often the ultimate goal for those who crave successful business careers as opposed to becoming leading researchers with publications in internationally recognized journals. Temple & Ylitalo (2009) agree that high potentials in business contexts often have more experience in managing others and taking strategic decisions than their academic counterparts even though they require the same skills and competencies.

In my organizational context, leadership positions were indeed mostly honorary positions for senior faculty members who had already earned their stripes, either by an impressive list of publications or excellent results in their lecturing and PhD supervision activities. So, based on previous merits and not necessarily leadership competency, these faculty members were then offered a leadership role by their university. Temple & Ylitalo (2009), in accordance with Henkel (2002), continue to wonder whether it is possible to find both willing and capable people to move to managerial roles in higher education institutes, because professors serving as heads of departments do not identify themselves as very strong managers. However, the authors agree, being successful in any leadership role requires both willingness and capability in order to take the role seriously. Sotirakou (2004) mentions that new demands and pressures involve a focus on high quality as well as on the effectiveness of academic work. This means that academic leaders must be able to manage their business units, think strategically, and lead strongly as an acclaimed academic leader at the same time. In other words, besides meeting the high demands of their academic work (teaching, publications), academic leaders are also under a lot of pressure to perform well as strategic business leaders with transformative management skills. This tension could lead to derailment behaviour: feeling the urgency to meet high expectations of superiors while being regarded as a high potential

are indeed ingredients towards becoming a derailed leader, according to Michael Lombardo (1989).

2.4.7 Social constructs around female leadership

As mentioned before, besides organisational context, also individual context plays a role in understanding derailment potential. My context is academic, but also being a female manager. Because traditionally most leadership behaviour (and derailment potential) has primarily been studied within a male only context, limited academic research exists around female derailment. I also wanted to investigate whether derailing *female* managers would differ from their male counterparts in terms of their personal experiences and motives.

Because women are increasingly filling top leadership positions, the derailment potential of women (as opposed to male derailment) has gained specific interest amongst scholars. Nobre et al (2014) investigated the phenomenon of limited existing research on derailing women. Other researchers seem to be biased and stereotyped such as Gregory & Kleiner (1991), which seems to be typical for the time of investigation. Kruse & Prettyman (2008), Nobre et al (2014) and Schuh et al (2014) explore the behavioural requirements for women to reach power positions and the negative image these leaders face. One conclusion by the authors is that it seems that gender differences and gaps still exist, influencing the behaviour of female managers. Another idea is that men are taught to be strong and powerful since their childhood, and most women are brought up with unconscious softer ideals and behavioural imagery and therefore need to learn to behave differently in a male-dominated world in order to be successful. According to the authors, this could be explained by the cultural context of continuing to define leadership and power as masculine, with a focus on male values and attributes. Kruse & Prettyman (2008) posit that these same cultural norms also define women in ways that make it problematic for them to be powerful and assume leadership roles. They conclude that this is based on differences between reality and perception (p.453). Schuh et al (2014) investigated that in relation to derailment potential, men and women do demonstrate differences in power motivation in terms of reaching top positions. So, even though Rasch, Shen, Davies, and Bono (2008) demonstrated that female leaders display the same derailment characteristics as their male counterparts, women follow a different career path than men based on different ambitions and different expectations of appropriate leadership behaviour.

One could also wonder whether using these male-originating characteristics do women any justice and are valid during derailment studies across genders.

Bono et al (2016) further examined gender bias in leaders' assessment of derailment potential. What is extremely useful and important regarding this recent female derailment study is that the authors demonstrated the effect of gender bias to resolving derailment. They discovered that leaders (or superiors) tend to withdraw mentoring support and sponsorship when they believe that a manager might derail in the future. This idea is especially critical for a woman's career advancement, as perceptions about derailment potential seem to be gender biased. Another interesting part of their research is that they demonstrate differences in male/female evaluations that only emerge 'when stereotypes are violated' (p.4). The authors explain that when male and female managers are displaying decent interpersonal behaviours, no stereotypes are 'activated', because such behaviours are expected from managers independent of gender, leading to similar positive evaluations. They write: 'it is only when role-based stereotypes are activated or violated that shifting standards of evaluation begin to emerge' (p.4).

When men and women engage in ineffective interpersonal behaviours, men tend to be excused and women will be punished for their behaviour. Viewed on a global scale, as discussed by Schrobsdorff (2016), during the most recent US presidential elections, Donald Trump was able to get away with aggressive behaviour (i.e. he was being excused for negative leadership traits), while Hillary Clinton was penalized for being overconfident and bossy and unfortunately, these 'double standards' also exist in many companies. In my organisation, critical women or assertive female managers were perceived as being aggressive by our male senior leadership, whereas colleagues in the same managerial level were being praised for their strong leadership characteristics. Interestingly, 90% of all employees were female, with the remaining 10% being men in upper level positions, meaning that in order to move upward in the organisation women had to display non-threatening behaviour and use appropriate language. The top-level managers were often complaining about the female 'bickering', thereby stereotyping and diminishing the female staff members, and obstructing their professional development and progress into senior positions - leading to increased demotivation amongst employees. This tension between appropriate behaviour, immobility

and lack of appreciation was very representative of the company culture during the study timeframe. Besides gender bias, leaders and staff members at the branch were also influenced by their cultural and social backgrounds, making the analysis of derailment behaviour even more complex.

2.4.8 Cultural and social constraints affecting views on effective leadership

Anyone who has ever visited Qatar or one of the other Gulf countries such as the Emirates, Oman, Bahrain or Kuwait, would have noted the variety of cultures and nationalities in the workforce affecting the social and economic status of individuals in these countries. As our branch in Qatar consisted of about 15 different nationalities and a variety of cultural backgrounds, cultural identities and social constraints, this must have also impacted perceptions of effective and appropriate leadership behaviour. At the branch, almost every employee originated from a different country, religion or culture, even though the school's identity was of French origin. Traditionally, the top-level positions were filled by Francophone senior managers and faculty members (i.e. from France or a French speaking country). Not surprisingly, the company culture of the branch was strongly affected by stereotyping with regards to cultural identity. Basically, the equation was: French identity = power.

Cultural identities are associated with certain power positions, and some cultural identity groups seem to possess greater power, prestige, and status than others, according to Ely & Thomas (2001). Working within an expat community in a Gulf country, I observed that leadership behaviour and management styles were often defined by people's land of origin, cultural identity and also by the adaptation to the local context and environment. A leading scholar on cultural identity in relation to stereotyping is Hofstede (2011). Hofstede distinguished organisational types (masculine or feminine) and attributed power distance to describe a typical leadership style to a nationality. Following his stereotyping, it is important for me to understand the differences between Arab and French and Dutch organisational types. In Qatar, I had only worked with Arab and French bosses. The local (Arabian Gulf) culture is firmly rooted in a collective tribal society where the individual is less important than the group and where seniority is clearly marked with types of power distance, resonating with Hofstede's Arab and French types. By personal observation, many local executives in my professional network seemed to lack the ability to reflect upon themselves critically perhaps

because it is discouraged by local culture, in line with Hofstede's stereotyping. In my experience, French corporate culture was indeed power distant, very hierarchal and 'masculine', where so-called 'hard' managerial skills were preferred above 'soft' skills, but with a high sense of individualism. As an example, in the Netherlands I had become quite used to a 'flat' organisational culture, where leadership styles are collaborative and participative, without unnecessary hierarchal structures or reporting lines. Within the two international organisations I was working for between 2009 and 2016 I noticed that their preferred management styles were not in line with my own cultural preferences. I easily assumed that this was due to the different cultural background of my senior executives, implying that critical self-reflection was less appreciated within these two organisations and therefore dysfunctional tendencies and derailment were not easily detected nor prevented.

However, I find stereotyping too arbitrary and dangerous when it comes to explaining certain leadership behaviour. Of course, cultural identity and views on appropriate and accepted behaviour play huge roles, but the local organisational context should be considered as well. Carson et al (2012) also stress that a derailed individual's organisational context as well as their role model history and innate character play equal roles. Li et al (2013) recommend that international managers therefore should develop cultural intelligence alongside emotional intelligence without relying too much on cultural stereotypes. Organisational learning should also include a strategy based on developing a variety of experiences and exposures, which interestingly is in line with Lombardo & Eichinger (1995)'s suggested treatment for derailed leaders. What this means for my study is that when assessing my own derailment potential, I should consider the clashes that may occur between individuals of different cultural backgrounds that affect their (leadership) behaviour but should not be distracted by stereotyping of individuals. Also, as an added bonus, the overseas experience has probably given me the exposure needed in my future career to become successful.

2.5 Measures against derailment

Looking at the general notion of derailment as being a weakness and a dark trait that needs to be 'cured', one could regard derailment as a truly 'wicked' organisational problem (Pedler, 2008) and even as an organisational 'disease'. Similar to clinical diagnosis and treatment, most approaches are distantly focused on 'the patient', the *other*, and actual self-diagnosis is rare.

This resonates with the dominantly positivistic and empirical research approaches within current studies on derailment (Gentry et al 2007, Carson et al, 2012). A possible limitation to the investigation into my own derailment and possible solutions is that many empirical studies take place almost exclusively in America, Europe or Australia (Carson et al, 2012; Gentry, 2007 and 2015) with some exceptions in Asia (Gentry et al, 2010).

They conclude that derailment of executives, managers, heads of departments, or team leaders, certainly has a huge impact on the individuals themselves, their co-workers, and the organization as a whole. Therefore, they argue, preventing leadership derailment should be an important strategic objective for all organisations. Knowledge of dysfunctional interpersonal tendencies and the risk towards derailment of individuals can help to identify potential derailing managers at an earlier stage in their career and therefore could help to limit future turnover. Suggested organisational prevention methods, such as regular feedback loops in performance reviews, may help to identify derailing *others*, but a critical question is whether managers are able to assess and reflect upon *their own* dysfunctional tendencies and derailment potential. Therefore, the conclusion from this study is that it is essential to include cultural and self-awareness dimensions when studying derailment within organisations.

In their case study book 'Preventing derailment', Lombardo & Eichinger (1989) take a customized view on measures against derailment. The authors view the issue from organisational and personal perspectives. They use the example of a high potential (female) manager who needs to be rescued from her imminent derailment within a firm. After careful analysis of her behaviour by the action researchers, it is indeed concluded that she is displaying derailment behaviour. Assuming that most derailment is preventable; they design a series of activities to keep the protagonist on track. These measures focus on *development of the individual:* exposing the individual to projects and situations where they cannot rely on their strengths. The protagonist is taken out of her comfort zone. For example, there are measures that develop the ability to handle each new leadership role and company situation, dealing with subordinates effectively while also dealing with her own personality. The case study, however, is typically written to assist senior executives in rescuing the high-potentials, and these measures mostly require high-level support and intervention initiated within the organisation. Nevertheless, important lessons for self-development can be drawn as well. For

example, the checklist introduced on page 11 of the book can provoke a solid first analysis of certain characteristics. The recommendations around developing team members and subordinates plus being exposed to different situations can very well be tested and tried on a personal level. Anyone who thinks they are derailing could follow these exercises and make a conscious effort to be exposed to a variety of managerial situations – especially those one does not necessarily feel comfortable in. Of course, this requires perseverance, patience and willingness. Perhaps Lombardo & Eichinger's most important lesson is not to draw too much on known strengths when ambitiously starting a new role.

More recently, Adrian Furnham published his books 'the Elephant in the Board Room' in 2010 and 'Backstabbers and Bullies' in 2015, containing useful and current ideas on leadership derailment, including prevention techniques and measures, but also recommendations on how to manage and deal with the problem once it is noticed. Furnham (2010) also makes an important distinction between failed and derailed leaders, a concept that is often misunderstood. He argues that failure is related to a*bsence* of quality and derailment with *presence* of quality (p. 234). The author takes more of an organisational view on derailment prevention, while also paying attention to the psychological impact of dealing with derailing individuals. He argues that power should be more evenly distributed in organisations and pleas for effective governance regulations and constraints to those on top. Furnham further posits that corporate governance balances out toxic leaders and their imminent failures. His message basically is that organisations allow leaders to misbehave but restricting them by organisational control mechanisms can easily solve this (p. 240). To sum up, it is important not to allow top executives to become the subject of discretion and autonomy due to unequal power distribution across the organisation, by keeping all processes, especially the decision-making processes on top, overt and transparent. The ultimate goal is to keep leadership weaknesses and dark traits at bay.

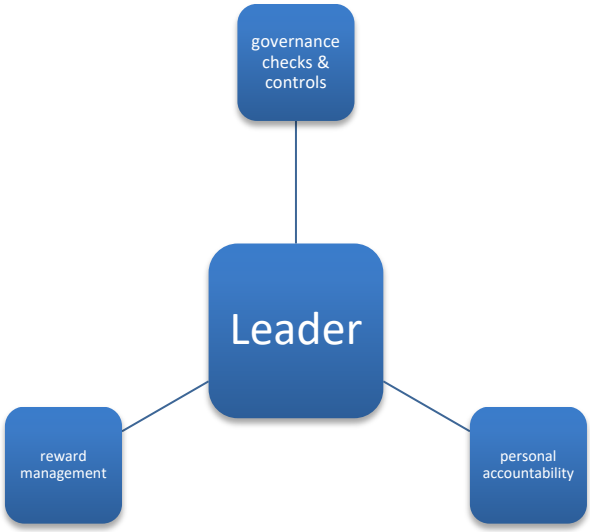


Figure 10:Organisational measures to keep leaders 'constrained'

Furnham (2010) continues with preventive organisational measures (p. 246-247) that should be part of standard management practice:

1. *recruitment & selection*: recognizing those characters and personalities prone to derailment in an early stage. Be aware of high potentials with dark traits;
2. *induction period*: making sure that anyone who enters the organisation receives a proper time of on-boarding as it sets expectations and clarifies issues from the start, setting clear goals and objectives, and finally forming relationships with stakeholders;
3. *development planning and career pathing*: it should become clear from the start who holds responsibility for the planning of professional development and promotion;
4. *performance management*: setting clear targets and allowing honest feedback.

These four measures can be used to check and evaluate whether my organisation had measures in place to prevent derailment to emerge. If the answer is negative for these points, it can be concluded that a foundation was missing, allowing for dark traits to surface. I will follow up on these measures in the data analysis chapter.

Furnham further points out that the cost of rescuing derailed professionals is much higher than ensuring proper selection from the start as well as by paying attention to the points as

listed above. Derailed executives can 'bankrupt organisations' (p. 247) as the cost of contracting head-hunters to select eligible candidates is often very high as mentioned before and is quite risky in terms of eventually getting the wrong person in the job again, which in turn could lead to *escalation of commitment* – i.e. not wanting to let go of a person or a persevering a project based on the prior high investment of time and resources (Staw, 1981; Sleesman, 2019).

According to Kaplan & Kaiser (2003) and Capretta at al (2008) and the Korn Ferry Institute, who have done extensive research on why leaders are unsuccessful and when they derail, it is recommended to focus on the process of assessment, intervention, and development. These four pillars of measures (including selection) are quite significant into helping leaders overcome potential obstacles in their careers and are in line with Lombardo's earlier recommendations. Scholars agree that derailing individuals should furthermore be supported on three deeper dimensions: competencies, traits and drivers. This resonates with Carson et al (2012)'s findings about the complexity of derailment and the importance of the organisational and personal context.

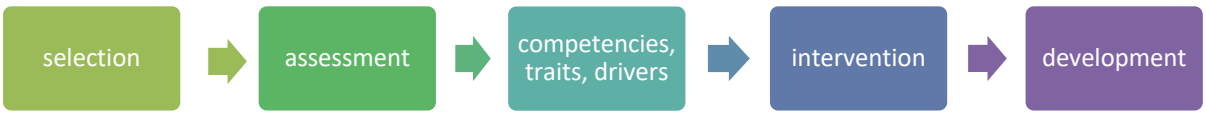


Figure 11: Pillars of measures against derailment

Summarizing studies concerning measures against derailment, scholars emphasize that derailment indicators and preventive measures should never be isolated from an investigation into organisational context and managerial expectations. I have placed these measures in one diagram to be used as an analytic tool to assess whether it was reasonable to assume that the organisational context and lack of preventive measures influenced and impacted the development of my derailment behaviour (see figure 12).

Figure 12: overview of measures against derailment

2.6 Summary of literature review and overview of contemporary discourses

To summarize the literature review, studies on derailment could be classified into three domains: the organisational level (strategic and cultural), the team or group level and the individual level. In order to understand derailment as a widespread phenomenon that could be linked to my own professional behaviour, it was critical to investigate views on appropriate leadership behaviour while also reviewing the social and cultural constructs that influence leadership behaviour. In the past century, different ideas have emerged on what leadership is and which leadership style suits the organisational context best: from individual to participative leadership and from directive to transformative managerial styles. These concepts have influenced the ideas and views of contemporary managers, shaping their images and expectations on leadership. Leaders who mistakenly think they should become

'fearsome and demanding leaders', instead of compassionate leaders, will face demotivated team members (Cuddy, Kohut, & Neffinger, 2017). When promoted into a higher function based on previous merits, some managers therefore change their authentic behaviour (Goffee & Jones, 2006) into what they think is expected from them, and they start displaying dysfunctional tendencies (Carson et al, 2012), after which they eventually may derail. As derailing leadership is a very costly affair for organisations (Gentry et al, 2007) because it mostly ends with resignation or at least highly unstable relationships within teams, it is important that derailment should be avoided and prevented. More than forty years of research shows the complexity of derailment: that certain devastating behavioural traits, such as displaying problems with interpersonal relationships or experiencing difficulty changing and adapting, are not simply a lack of certain expertise or competencies (Gentry et al, 2015). Underlying are complex personality traits and behaviours, now widely used by organisational psychologists to assess leadership behaviour (Carson et al, 2012).

Nevertheless, the original characteristics of derailment behaviour as defined by Lombardo (1988, 1989) are presently widely accepted and being understood in business environments. Defining measures mentioned in many derailment prevention studies are self-awareness (Gentry, 2007) and mindfulness (Seiling & Hinrichs, 2005). However, despite regular reviews, measures to detect or treat derailment within all types of organisations are not widely implemented (Carson et al, 2012; Witherspoon, 2014). Nevertheless, managers nowadays are stimulated to work on self-leadership within their own development (Manz et al, 2016). And this is where a paradox exists: detecting dysfunctional tendencies in oneself is highly improbable and may only occur in hindsight, when derailment has already taken place (Gentry et al, 2007). The ability to self-reflect is key, with or without the help from an external professional such as a coach. Still, the issue of not wanting to show weakness or insecurity inhibits many recently promoted leaders (Goffee & Jones, 2017). Getting back on track mostly happens in a new job within a new organisational structure, with different examples of leadership behaviour (Lombardo & Eichinger, 1983). There are some accounts of managers being rescued, but most organisations would not opt for costly rehabilitation tracks and would rather let the derailed go (Lombardo & Eichinger, 1990). Then, other factors play a role as well: men and women derail differently (Bono et al, 2016), and views on appropriate leadership behaviour differ per sector and per culture or region (Hofstede, 1993). In the academic world,

according to Temple & Ylitalo (2009), acclaimed faculty members view taking on an executive position as a temporary and mostly honorary side job, as opposed to their primary research and teaching activities. In other words, it is not envisioned to reach a top-level position in the organisation. This is of importance as my professional practice is in higher education.

Research into leadership derailment clearly entails a profound understanding of the complexity of this type of destructive behaviour. In general, researchers aim to find behavioural and psychological patterns and causes for derailment in order for practitioners to prevent it or treat it (Kaiser et al, 2015). These patterns could arise by addressing multiple variables and themes, such as personality, behaviour (including traits and triggers), gender, company culture, nationality, or history. Personality measurement and psychometric analysis are common contemporary approaches in order to analyse (and predict) leadership derailment (Hogan et al, 2010), besides extensive studies of large populations of managers (Gentry, 2007) as well as exemplary case studies about derailed leaders (Van Luijk, 2014) and grounded overviews of (destructive) leadership related personality types (Furnham, 2010). It is also important to note the role of popular non-academic publications with regards to managerial perceptions on leadership derailment. Popular satirical books and online articles or videos analysing supposed contemporary political and business leaders are very common and popular amongst business leaders and management professionals, such as the popular Schrijvers (2002). Frequently, business magazines such as Harvard Business Review, Huffpost or Management Team publish easily digested articles on success stories and failures that are derived from scientific research such as Zenger & Folkman (2009), but may therefore lack the contemporary nuances and insights into complexity provided by academic publications.

What every piece of research and popular writing about leadership behaviour seem to have in common is the paradox surrounding derailment, as executives who fail mostly have a history of success and impressive accomplishments ending in a dramatic trail of destruction (Lombardo & McCall, Hogan). Most researchers agree that ‘the cost of failure can be very high’ (Furnham, 2010; p.3) as leaders (good and bad) have an impact on organisational performance, employee motivation and company culture (idem). In the past decade, there are still researchers connecting undesirable and harmful personality traits to derailment (Blair et al 2017) in order to detect destructive behaviour on time, but many publications currently

focus on preventive organisational measures (Furnham, 2010) and emphasize on the complexity of the issue with many different underlying factors that may but do not have to lead to derailment (Carson et al, 2012). Accounts of derailment research within higher education and the related globalisation of business education (the researcher's context) are very rare, and academic accounts of leadership derailment and destructive behaviour from a first-person perspective are very uncommon.

The greatest flaw that I found while reviewing the literature, is that it continues to have an emphasis on *the other*, or rather and more accurately formulated: research on derailment tends to be objective and distant by nature in order for HR professionals, coaches or executives to apply the theory and solve the problem of the derailing individual, almost as if it is a disease that needs eradicating. Accounts of self-initiated attempts are rare to virtually non-existent. Therefore, the gap I aim to fill is providing with an insight into the challenges of self-initiated behavioural change from a managerial perspective with an emphasis on the issues relating to self-regulation and including the organisation into prevention and treatment measures.

2.7 Drawing all of the strands together in a conceptual framework

After reviewing a wide range of publications concerning leadership derailment and recommended measurements to prevent or tackle the problem, the conceptual framework exists of:

A. Definitions of what derailment is and what the characteristics are of the phenomenon;

B. Factors that influence(d) the emergence of derailment in general and in the organisational context of this study: innate characteristics and personality types, company culture, gender (bias), preconceived ideas on appropriate and effective leadership behaviour, checks and balances within the organisation;

C. Measures against derailment: 1) individual development: exposure, experiential learning, personal and professional identity; 2) organisational development: corporate governance, regular assessment, managing organisational culture and expectations on appropriate leadership behaviour**.**

Figure 13 visualizes the conceptual framework:

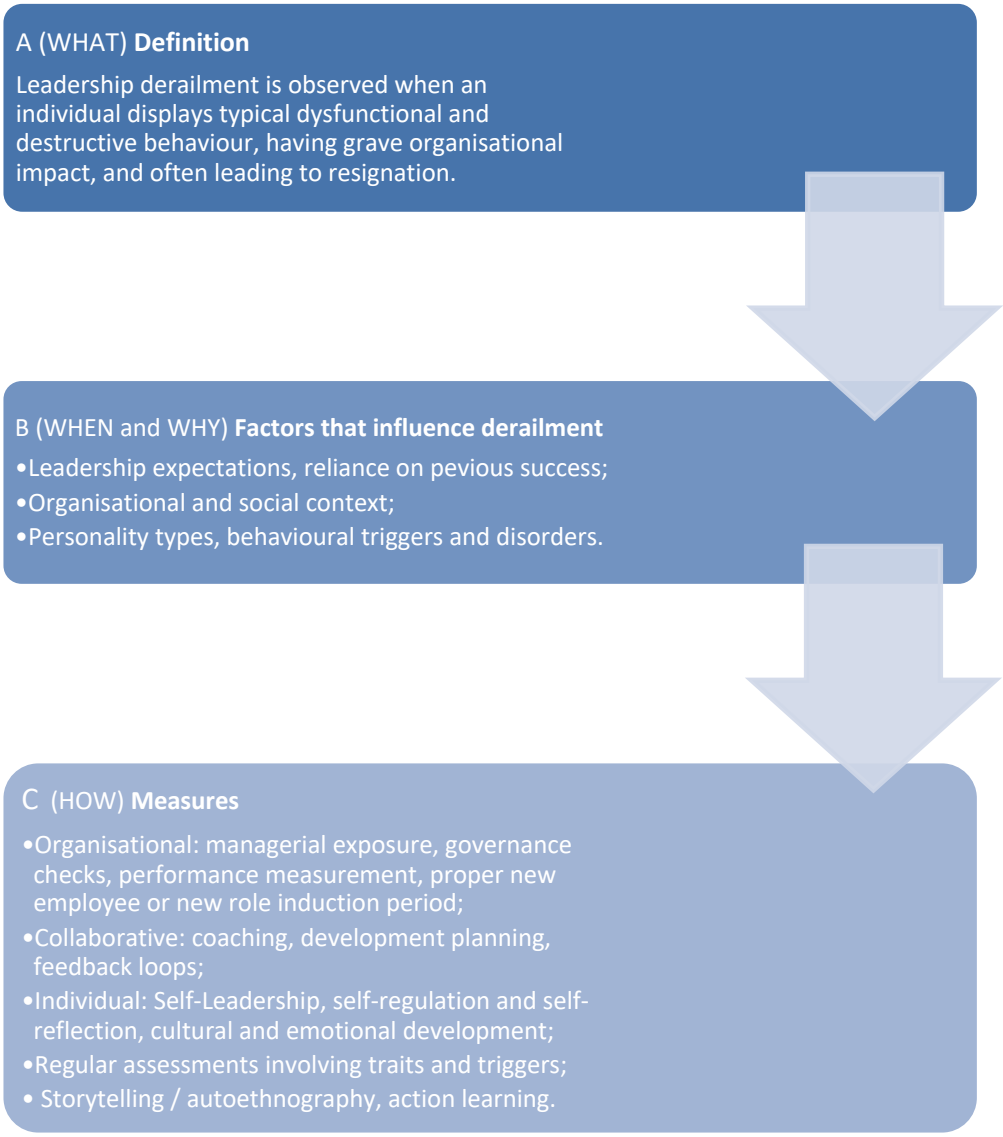


Figure 13: what, when and how of conceptual framework

CHAPTER 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The main topic of study is the exploration of preventing leadership derailment by self-inquiry driven first person action research. In this study, I situated myself as a researcher in the middle of the problem, reflecting on the influence of my own (leadership) behaviour on the events while they unfold and the impact of the behaviour of my superiors on my own performance and actions. My primary aim was to gain insight in the challenges of self-improvement through action research in order to inform business professionals in similar situations. As Coghlan & Brannick (2010) suggest, investigation into how the systemic relationship works between the individual, the group and the organisation 'is critical to the nature of the organisational problem solving and issue resolution' (p.75). The idea was that an immersion into prevention methods should lead to a greater understanding of the challenges around self-inquiry driven problem solving and action learning, focusing on behavioural change. Seeing myself as a case study with an autoethnographic perspective resulted in constructing narratives. By immersing myself in the narrative I expected to draw conclusions about my own derailment within this organisation. My secondary aim was to develop set of activities and tools to enable others to identify and address derailment, which could be used for educational purposes. This tool kit would be the result of analysis and synthesis based on findings and insights from undertaken research activities.

3.2 Research design and related questions

In chapter 1 an explanation was provided on how the research design was constructed, which events led to the urgency of studying the organisational and personal issue, and my motivation in deciding to take a first-person insider perspective.

Consequently, the research questions were formulated as follows:

RQ1 Can someone recognize their own derailment, and how?

S1: Which type of analysis is most suitable for self-inquiry and reflection in order to prevent or avoid derailment in my organisational context?

S2: Which boundaries/limitations exist in detecting and treating one's own derailment behaviour?

S3: How can academic findings combined with my own experience of undergoing selected 'treatments' be translated into a useful toolkit (checklists and activities) for other business professionals?

RQ2. Which factors impacted derailment potential and possible solutions in my organisational context?

The answer to R1 was primarily derived from reviewing the works of scholars who have done extensive research on leadership derailment. Secondary, I decided to immerse myself into testing several treatments and using checklists derived from the literature. The first cycle of the action research would be to analyse my leadership derailment potential, based on the selected checklists from academic publications. This would have to result in recommendations based on real experiences, understanding the challenges and tensions. The second cycle of investigation would be an immersion in the form of a case study, using narrative writing as a method to develop a multi-perspective view in order to understand the impact of my behaviour and to feel empathic (sympathetic) towards the behaviour of my superiors. The final cycle would be the development of a tool kit to help others.

S2. Which boundaries and limitations exist in detecting and treating one's own derailment behaviour?

Understanding boundaries and limitations requires a meta-analytic view with regards to the extent to which an individual can detect dysfunctional behaviour and derailment characteristics in themselves. This question is relevant to understanding the challenges of self-inquiry and self-development. The question also relates to bias and psychological principles. It is a logical consequence of knowing whether someone can see derailment happening while in action. If this is impossible, or in case there are too many limitations, the follow-up question could be: can we implement checks and balances to ensure that our own derailment is noticed & acted upon? Would guidance from an outsider, such as a coach, be sufficient?

S3. How can findings and experiences be combined into a toolkit for other business professionals?

Upon answering the previous sub-questions, requiring multiple action research cycles, an assessment was to be made on measures that were effective and which actions or modes of enquiry were still necessary to come up with relevant conclusions. In parallel, I created a

workshop on derailment prevention for MBA students, alumni, colleagues and interested executives. The objective of a toolkit was a pragmatic, helpful approach that would stimulate critical thinking as well as reflective practice.

Answering the second research question (R2) tests which measures could have been applied in the organisational context, assuming that I or others were in fact derailing. Consequently, presuming that I were not derailing, could I have rescued others, and could I have influenced dysfunctional tendencies of my superiors in such a way that these would have turned into positive (effective) behaviours? The counterhypothesis here to understand what would work best is: I would not have derailed if I had done X and/or my organization had done Y. This required an analysis of a scenario in a very hypothetical situation where the derailment prevention measures and techniques had been known, understood and implemented. Whether or not the hypothesis (*I am derailing*) was true, I attempted to find answers using a careful analysis of the case study and the multi-perspective narratives, complemented by a study of organisational, cultural and social context, and insights gained from reviewing scholarly works no derailment.

3.3 Ontology and epistemology

Before explaining the choices of methodology, my ontological and epistemological assumptions need to be explained. As explained in Chapter 1, the complexity and multi-layered organisational problem of derailment prevention at my professional practice required an approach that could have been investigated with a positivistic approach and purely using quantitative analysis, but it would not resonate well with my objective of providing with an insider perspective. An interesting, more positivist study, could have been to study the impact of derailment (or dark traits, or resigned executives) on employee performance at the branch, or do statistical research amongst the foreign and local universities on the frequency of derailment in higher education in Qatar. A study by Gentry (2007, 2010) for example could also have been replicated, looking at assessment data and feedback ratings from large samples of gender, culture and profession. Surely, such a study would generate interesting data but to me it would be less meaningful in terms of a) helping other managers who struggle with the same problem and with regards to b) getting insight into the thought process of self-initiated behavioural change though action research.

However, I wanted to make sense of emotions, types of behaviour, stories and interactions I observed in my professional environment and in myself. This implied that the approach would have to be interpretative by nature, as interpretative research concentrates on 'specific meanings and meaning-making practises in a given context' (Schwartz-Shoa & Yanow, 2013; p.1). Furthermore, interpretative research 'acknowledges the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is being explored, and the social constraints shaping this process' (Rowlands, 2005; p.81). The emphasis of interpretative research lays on what Rowlands (2005) defines as the socially constructed nature of reality by language, shared meanings and consciousness, and to provide with a social context of the phenomenon. In my organisational context these elements can be translated into the constructs of appropriate leadership behaviour, social and cultural factors influencing this behaviour, how everyone communicated in the branch, what people expected from leadership and how I reacted towards leadership based on my own constructs, assumptions and biases. For me, it was essential to look at our organisational problem as a build-up of several constructs of reality, as derailment is a complex multi-layered phenomenon constructed by many elements such as (innate or developed) personality traits, previous experiences, role-modelling, assumptions, ideas, cultural background and social influences, as discussed in chapter 2. These constructs of reality therefore exist on different scales, i.e. individual thoughts influence behaviour, which influences interpersonal relationships, and these circles influence the policy, procedure, systems of the organisation, and many more social constructs. Kukla (2013) discusses, explains and criticizes social constructivism as a philosophy, and reading this book reconfirmed my ontological and epistemological standpoints. Social constructivists often include the subject's voice in the research process, (Thorpe & Holt, 2008; p.201) which is my own voice in this study. One could argue critically, from a philosophical standpoint, that my research also contains post-modern elements as I aim at 'embedded contextual experiences, accumulated memories […] that define the very possibilities for interpretation and action' (idem; p.163). As action research is a non-linear process (see next paragraph), going through many cycles and emerging themes, I would argue that the research is based on both social constructivist and post-modern principles.

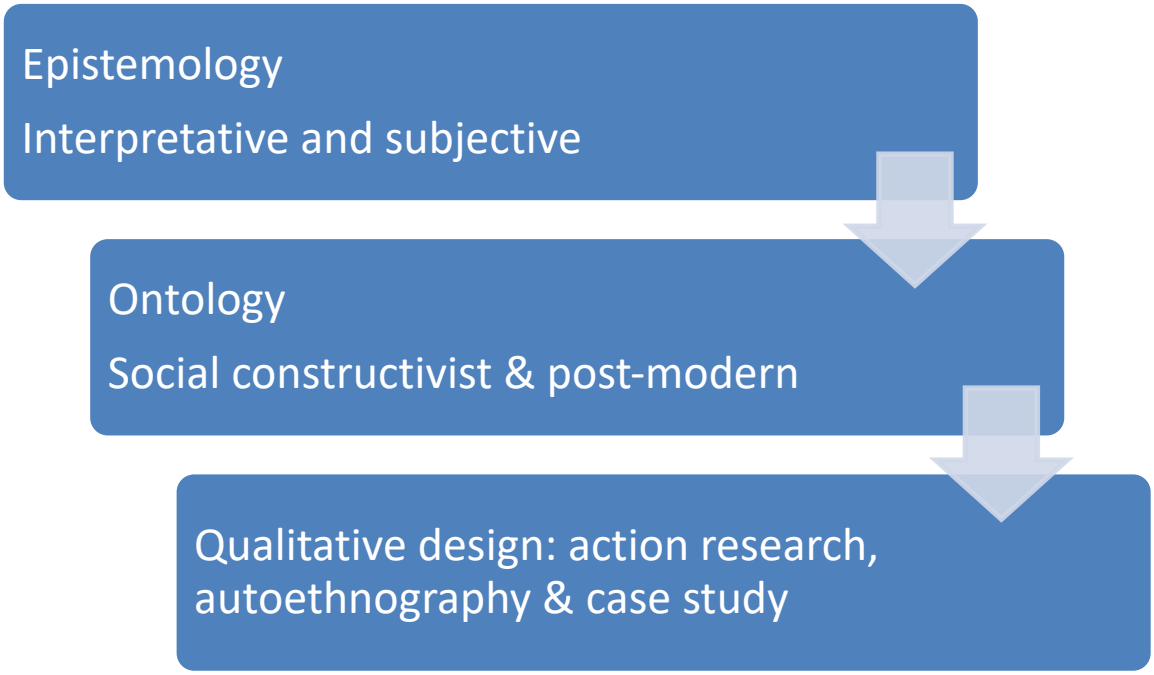


Figure 14: breakdown of philosophical foundations and research design

My study into derailment entails introspective reflexivity, which is an awareness of my effect on the process and outcomes of the research. As this can lead to a lack of presenting meaningful research (Thorpe & Holt, 2008), it is important to deploy a strong focus on the methods and the iterative process alongside an acknowledgement of the role of myself as the researcher. Finally, my research contains elements of pragmatism (idem, p.169), as 'experience develops through action and thinking in the process of inquiry, critical thinking or reflection, stressing the transactional relationship between subject and world'.

To conclude, in order to study the phenomenon from a first-person perspective and observe the challenges of self-initiated behavioural change, it was imperative to choose an interpretative research design and methodology, and not a positivist or quantitative methodology. Nonetheless, I would be able to build upon my findings with a quantitative follow-up, using questionnaires amongst managers in similar situations. As an example, Lombardo et al (1988) provided with empirical support for earlier qualitative findings using a quantitative analysis.

3.4 Selecting a method of inquiry

In order to choose an appropriate methodology, as a starting point I considered all the main qualitative approaches that Creswell (2013) and Creswell & Poth (2017) distinguish:

phenomenology, narrative research, ethnography, case study, grounded theory. Even though I study a phenomenon (i.e. derailment) and I go through life reflecting upon events in my personal diaries that could be seen as phenomenology, in line with Van Manen (2014)'s convincing arguments, the method itself is too philosophical and lacks the pragmatism I was looking for in this context. Applying the grounded theory method as explained in Creswell (2013), Creswell & Poth (2017) and Thorpe & Jackson (2012) would also not serve the main purpose of coming up with actionable results and practical recommendations. Instead, I understood that I had developed a preference for ethnographic research as I have always kept work journals and diaries throughout my career (as I once learned during my master's to make notes of my surroundings for later use as a change agent).

Core to this research is the fact that I (being researcher alongside employee) was closely involved in the organisation and have been taking personal notes with observations for more than five years. Therefore, my initial approach was ethnographic research. I have always been interested in describing an insider perspective, so that other people's realities could be more closely identified and better understood. Since I was also an employee, 'working within the organisation alongside others to all intents and purposes as one of them' (Easterby-Smith et al, 2012; p.144), I was able to completely immerse myself while keeping a focus on critical observation. I was able to experience how it felt to head towards derailment, finding myself in a similar situation as former colleagues who derailed and eventually resigned.

Ethnography was initially applied while I was a participant-observer with the aim of writing down the story of development of the branch, including executive decisions towards adopting a certain strategy. I had already been involved in writing and publishing case studies about other organisations and had the initial approval of our Dean to write up the story of the branch as a case study. However, after a few years I noticed that there was an emerging pattern regarding leadership behaviour and I concluded that merely writing the developmental story would prohibit organisational learning in terms of behavioural change.

According to Thorpe & Holt (2008), ethnography as a research methodology originates in social anthropology, with particular references to the culture of social groups and societies. Heider (1975) described ethnography as a form of 'personal immersion' into a culture or social group, while pertaining the research peripheral vision (p.3). 'Derailing managers' can easily be

observed as a particular social group (of staff members that are potentially very harmful and costly for organisations), who behave in similar ways, use similar language and affect other social organisational groups in a similar fashion. Derailment doesn't happen in an isolated environment; it is a complex layered build-up of interactions, constructs, beliefs, and personal experiences, as can be concluded from the literature review (Carson et al, 2012). The key task of ethnography is therefore 'to provide an understanding of ourselves (and others) as members of societies or groups or organisations that are by their very nature "strange" and diverse and that it is this strangeness that we should celebrate' (Thorpe & Holt, 2008). The first step according to the authors is to undertake close observation of the group by keeping diaries, exploring documents and talking to others, while the second step is inductive analysis, to expose the underlying structures that produce certain behaviour and how these behaviours can be misunderstood or contradict themselves (p.90). Ethnographic research can be undertaken overtly or covertly, unstructured and structured and the advantages of this type of research are truly insider views on organizational problems (p.90). The problems of ethnography, however, are being too close to the subject of research and being too introspective, resulting into issues in terms of distance and detachment and needing constant self-reflection (Thorpe & Jackson, 2012; p.91).

So, when I decided to use a first-person perspective to investigate my role in the problems and focus on myself instead of others, I decided to apply an *auto*ethnographic method. Autoethnography as a research method developed in the 1970s within anthropological research. According to Riedler (2016), an autoethnographic researcher employs a lot of self-reflection to explore personal experiences and connect these to larger organisational problems or even social issues. The author mentions that this self-reflective approach provides an opportunity to speak from the inside out as a researcher and as a manager (or organisational member) while experiencing a deeper understanding of the ego and to explore the changes that have taken place in the activities along the journey of doing research in one's own organisation.

The autoethnographic foundation of my thesis research covers five years of observations, conversations, and periodical literature reviews, in order to understand why people around me seemed to derail or whether I was derailing. A study spanning several years was needed

to see patterns emerging over time, as some dysfunctional characteristics only surface when observed long term that are not immediately visible and even seem to be constructive traits when observed short term (Carson et al, 2011). Keeping journals and reviewing all of the experiences and those of my colleagues helped me in the problematizing stage of the research.

Notably, Creswell (2013) categorizes autoethnography under narrative research instead of ethnography (alongside biographical studies, life history and oral history research), as it is written by a single individual who is also the subject of the study. The author gives an example of a doctoral dissertation that shed light on a researcher's personal and professional life (p.73). Autoethnography is therefore also a narrative study. According to Greenwood & Levin (2007), 'AR gains much of its power through narratives', because they are particularly 'revealing specific histories, processes, commitments, battles, defeats and triumphs, the core of the cogenerative dialectic' (p.110). Each narrative connects situations, people, and other elements and therefore is a type of generalization that offers different perspectives around the same problem. In my organisation, the personal accounts of certain negative experiences (shouting, irrational behaviour) were an essential part of the sense-making efforts amongst employees, but also contributed to organisational silence and distrust towards upper management. On a meta-analytic level, the narrative of the cycles as well as personal reflections in the Doctoral Development Plan (DDP) play an important role in reflecting upon the whole process of AR, the research and the thesis writing. Narratives and telling stories about personal experiences are therefore essential elements for self-reflection. The AR writing of this study into derailment therefore took the form of several narratives with detailed discussions of the thought processes and the events that took place during the five years of studying the organisation. The narratives and personal stories give information about the context of the problem of derailment, providing with personal experiences, cultural stories and historical contexts, as discussed by Creswell & Poth (2017). The narratives are written as didactical cases, with a business case narrative including a protagonist with a (leadership) dilemma, showing different perspectives on the same issue and allowing for collective discussion (Creswell, 2013; p.99). The case method is very typical for business education (Pilz & Zenner, 2017) and I have been very familiar with teaching and writing educational cases. Seeing my experiences and my story as a case assisted in taking a more objective helicopter

view, as there was a growing awareness of being immersed to such a degree that patterns and issues could potentially be overlooked.

Greenwood & Levin (2007) agree that case studies, being forms of narratives, are an important tool to systematically write up the experiences from activities in the AR project. This activity revolves around cycles of active experimentation and reflection over what happened and sense making of what has produced or created those effects (p.111).

Case studies investigate the 'how and why' of events that occur, especially when they are 'beyond the control of the researcher' (Göttfert, 2015; p.27). As mentioned in Thorpe & Jackson (2012) case study research is comprised of different approaches and serves different purposes, but they argue that case study research is generally and particularly effective in approach phenomena that are ambiguous, chaotic and complex (p.38). From my experience as a case writer for executive education, they serve an excellent purpose in the classroom to make readers familiar with leadership dilemmas or corporate stories of success and failure. The creative process is similar to action research when working with companies or executives to collect and tell their stories. In ethnography and action research, the case study forms the narrative by which the collected data is consolidated, to describe exactly what happened, how it happened and which issues and complexities emerged. Case studies, in the form of business cases, form examples of real practices and complex managerial dilemmas (Thorpe & Jackson, p.38). In their book 'Preventing Derailment: What to do before it is too late', Lombardo and Eichinger (1989) use the case study around Michelle as a leading exemplary narrative to discuss the complexities of derailment and the actions taken to change the situation. The authors start with general information about derailment and provide with some checklists that are being used later on in their book to illustrate Michelle's derailment behaviour. Using Michelle's story of downfall and development gives the issue an individual face (p.12), as well as some useful activities to explore in similar situations (p.22). This book inspired me to follow a similar construction to give meaning to my own (inter)actions and behaviour in relation to the organisational issues of the branch. Another example is Van Luijk (2014) taking cases as examples of derailment behaviour and notoriously bad behaving business leaders. The author uses each example to further elaborate on personality traits.

The results of the application of the case study method were the production of 3 cases, each with a different perspective. I could have used many case studies, but I chose these three cases as they exemplify my development, my behaviour, and the context. One case comprises my professional early development in Qatar, complemented by the story of my early years at the branch based on my DDP, and the final case tells the events that led to my resignation through the lens of senior management (the climax).

The case study narratives were written by making use of the collected data from my notebooks, and from memory, and by collecting observations from colleagues who were present when the events were unfolding. The purpose of these case studies was not to provide accurate accounts, even though they are based on easily verifiable real facts and data, but to see the events through the lenses of my superiors in order to attempt to understand them while observing myself during those events. The case studies were then analysed by applying the checklists of dark traits and derailment indicators and comparing these to the stories, to conclude whether my behaviour and communication were part of the organisational problem and to reflect upon what could have been done to prevent this. Restrictions to the case studies were subjectivism and biased writing, however it needs to be stressed that their purpose was also therapeutic towards self-leadership. Seeing events and behaviour though the lens of someone else, by remaining critical to oneself and immersing oneself in the thought patterns of others, resulted into unexpectedly becoming more empathic and sympathetic (to these superiors). These cases assisted me, being the researcher, in generating the knowledge that is going to be used in educating 'the public' on leadership derailment and the challenges of self-improvement.

So, the first approach that I adopted was to explore derailment through the lens of personal managerial experiences within a framed period of time in the context of the higher education sector and from the perspective of being in an expat environment in Qatar with its own unique challenges and tensions. The second approach was viewing the organisational context and the derailment phenomenon as a case, to illustrate and anecdote the complexity of the problem, to give examples of derailment behaviour(s) and to study the situation with a more detached observation.

After exploring what I wanted to investigate, and after shifting perspective towards my own behaviour (from exo to ego), I also realized that I went through different experimental phases in order to form a multi-level and holistic understanding and conclusion. Only the systematic cycles of action research would then serve as the most appropriate overarching research methodology that would help me structure my research design and data collection while also working towards transformation, which will be explained in the next paragraph.

3.4.1 Action Research

Action research, as described by Coghlan & Brannick (2010, 2019), is a transformational inquiry approach, where third person research integrates with first person 'voices. The authors describe first person research as being 'typically characterized as a form of inquiry and practice that one does on one's own and so addresses the ability of the individual to foster an inquiring approach to his or her life, to act out of awareness and purposefully' (p.5). First person research takes researchers along an investigation of their own basic assumptions, intentions, behaviour, ways of relating and acting in the world (p.6). In contradiction, the third person voice is impersonal and is characterized by reporting, publishing and generalizing. Action researchers, the authors posit, work on the epistemological assumption that besides describing and understanding, research should also lead to change (idem). Action research projects aim to study social reality, including a scholar-practitioner who is a participant but who also incorporates the perspective of the critical and analytic observer (Idem, p.7). AR also aims at solving problems. Therefore, AR resonates with my preferred ontological research paradigms of interpretivism, social constructivism and pragmatism.

Action research is a particular method that concerns change and intervention, where researchers and practitioners work together on urgent matters, bringing theory and practice together (Easterby-Smith et al, 2012; p. 155). The idea is to change the organization, which may or may not succeed, and also the transformation may not be as intended. Greenwood & Levin (2007) describe action research as 'a type of social research carried out by a team that encompasses a professional action researcher and the members of an organization, community or network ('stakeholders'), seeking to improve the participants' situation' (p.3). This type of research is therefore typically done *with* and *on* participants (Dick & Greenwood, 2015) in order to provide 'learning and understanding', and it is acknowledged that change by

action research is very complex and therefore this learning objective is not always achievable (p.195).

Also, as can be read in the Sage Encyclopedia of Action Research (2014) and Boden et al (2015), AR scholars in general stress the participative aspect of this type of research. Dick & Greenwood (2015) mention that it is a 'commitment to participation and action' (p.195). Most action research is therefore highly collaborative and generally seeks to cooperate with dedicated AR groups. According to Johnson & Duberly (2000), participatory action research has two intentions: to produce knowledge and action directly beneficial to a group and to empower people through raising consciousness (p. 138). Greenwood (2015) strongly posits that AR is less of a method but more of a strategy and should be 'an ongoing cycle of cogenerative knowledge creation' (p.133).

A typical AR process is therefore not linear, but takes on a spiralling or circular form:

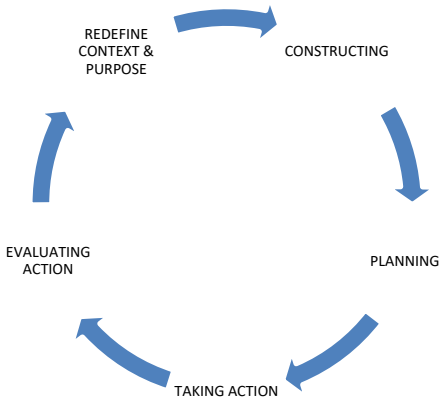


Figure 15: Action Research Cycle (Coghlan & Brannick, 2010; p. 8)

Kemmis & Mc Taggart (1988; in Johnson & Duberley, 2000) defined action research as 'a form of collective self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out' (p.138). In terms of understanding derailment in my organisational context, or the factors influencing leadership behaviour, my first preference was applying such a collective self-reflective inquiry in order for us to change behaviour, processes and systems. However, such an action research group was not positively supported by top management in my organisation,

or within the partner organisation. Top management was very concerned with our brand image and had no intentions to study leadership behaviour or reflecting upon oneself, nor were they interested in employees reflecting upon (their) leadership behaviour. Within the branch we did embark on some collective sense-making in line with Weick (1995), with my role being that of the scholar-practitioner. Having conversations with colleagues and superiors on organizational problems or straight after a little crisis happened, while trying to find solutions based on the articles we had read, was an informal kind of action learning, of self-reflective inquiry, that became our practice throughout the years, initiated or led by me. These findings were being described and analysed in the critical action learning reports of the time. Periodically, colleagues came to me with their organisational problems, asking whether I could find scientific articles on the topic or useful case studies that had been published, in order to inform them and improve their decision-making or adopt alternative viewpoints. Middle management often included these findings in their meetings with top management, or with the head office, or with their own team members. However, I noted that most of the CAL reports that I shared with senior leadership ended up in their bottom drawers or on a shelf.

To summarize, change based on sense making and 'weaving of ideas' did take place on a micro-level in line with Tsoukas & Chia (2002), but I frequently met an impenetrable wall when suggesting improvements to the executive level. The problem of organizational silence also played a role here, which had led to a clear disconnect with and limited recognition of the positive changes and little modifications already continuously taking place. Measuring these subtle changes and linking this back to action learning as a causal relationship was impossible without high-level support. It could have been properly done if an action researcher would be supported top down to form action learning-sets and work groups in order to formulate a problem and study its progress towards an executive decision or any other workable solution. However, this was not the case in my organisation. Measuring or tracking any changes in an organization that works in silos, and that is highly foggy in terms of its decision-making, is also almost impossible. Asking former colleagues whether our collaborative action learning attempts were successful and whether it influenced their own decision-making or their perspective on certain situations could only be done informally. Eventually, I found a solution to avoid being seen as a troublemaker and negative influencer by redirecting my scope towards first person AR.

4.4.2 First-person Action Research

In opposition to *collective* self-reflective practice in action research, is self-reflection inquiry from a *first-person* perspective. Logan (2012) attempted to suggest a dual approach, combining first- and second person-based inquiry in action research, thereby emphasizing on the 'personal voice' in academic writing. Self-inquiry action research studies can therefore assist scholar-practitioners such as myself into gaining better insight into their own practices (and in their own contexts) through reflection, in order for them to inquire into ways to improve these practices, thereby identifying possible factors that cause for example low performance or certain dysfunctional behaviour (Chang et al, 2013).

One researcher who has always been very influential to my research is Judi Marshall (2004), who made first-person action research her main focus. I was inspired by her statement in *Living life as inquiry*: 'I currently prefer the notion of inquiry as life process, respecting how inquiring is a core of my being, and that my full being is involved in any researching I undertake' (p.438). First person action research resonates with autoethnography, with the difference that it studies and works on changes and developments 'in action', whereas auto-ethnography analyses narratives, cultural and personal development in retrospective. The narrative, as Creswell & Poth (2017) and Greenwood & Levin (2007) argue, is an important and powerful tool to write up the experiences from activities in the AR project. As memories fade and change over time, the ability to re-read the narratives and going back to journal notes contributed greatly to the analysis of the research. The structure of action research assisted in making sense of the different phases of the investigation into my own behaviour within its organisational context while also focusing on actionable results. The pragmatism of Greenwood (2015) was supportive into combining 'multiple methods and techniques according to the concrete needs of particular groups and situations' (p. 131) within the framework of action research - even though he was having participative and collective action research in mind when giving his argument.

3.5 Data collection, generation and representation

Typically, the methodology section of an autoethnographic study within action research would first describe the context in which the research took place including a description of the researcher, followed by details on the data collection and data analysis phases,

complemented by a careful description of the quality control procedures and ethical issues (Ellis, 2004; Snoeren et al, 2016). My data collection, generation and representation followed a similar structure.

3.5.1 Research site

The context and research site, as explained in the first chapter, was an overseas branch of a business school in Qatar, one of the Gulf states in the Middle East. Within autoethnographic studies the researcher is also the subject of research (Creswell & Poth, 2017) and therefore a description of me as the researcher in third person voice follows.

3.5.2 Description of the researcher

The research is a Dutch female manager with a Master of Arts degree complemented by post-academic diplomas and was in her mid-thirties while working in Qatar. She has had a few middle-management roles within the company and the partnering umbrella organisation: department head, project manager for executive education and manager of the local research office. The roles were full-time functions and she reported into senior leadership of the branch. Alongside her professional career, she was pursuing a doctorate in business administration and she investigated organisational problems that she discussed in critical action learning (CAL) reports, which were part of the programme's research activities.

3.5.3 Description of the data and data collection

As I have always been interested in keeping diaries since I was 7 years old, I continued doing so during my professional life with some intervals. My interest sparked again after participating in a change management module for a master's degree I was pursuing in 2007, where the professor stressed the importance of proper observations and recording behaviours while acting as a consultant. At that time, I started writing down tasks, notes and observations in one book. Most notebooks lasted one year. Initially, these notes served as inspirations for research topics and sources for papers during the DBA programme modules.

Figure 16: Picture of my notebooks (Zwaanstra, 2019)

Upfront I kept notes on tasks and projects, or general comments such as 'process is too lengthy' or 'L. does not want to create a RACI', and at its back I reflected on what was happening around me or how I felt ('I am not the person who is being judged' or 'P2 is under pressure'). Of course, I coded my diary entries as much as I could or wrote some reflections in Dutch. In order to write the CAL reports I also kept similar notebooks for literature review, problematizing and problem analysis. Thoughts and ideas after coaching sessions were also recorded. After leaving the branch, I continued making notes and writing down observations, analyses and thoughts. The data in the notebooks included literature reviews, experiences and stories collected at various times with the aims of monitoring myself as a researcher, detecting emerging patterns during action research and supervising reflexivity, similar to the process applied by Snoeren et al (2016). I reflected on both the process made, the organisational context and my own role not only in the notebooks but also in my doctoral development plan (DDP), as submitted to the University of Liverpool in May 2015. At the end of the AR cycles, I developed a toolkit and a workshop to present my findings to my current organisation, consisting of a presentation, cases and a video (see Appendix 4 for samples).

Data collection and autoethnographic research took place between 2011 and 2016, reflections on the experimentation phase and the construction of the cases and thesis writing occurred between 2016 and 2018. The main objective of using constructed narratives originating in autoethnographic research was to invite outsiders into the subjective world of the narrator (Ellis, 2004; Snoeren et al, 2016). I am aware of the fact that it may be difficult to recall in detail all the previous experiences (Ellis et al, 2010), but in order to increase the credibility of this research and freshen my memory I regularly consulted my CAL reports, DDP, and

notebooks. After reflecting on my own version of what had happened in a particular period of time, as noted in the CAL reports, the DDP and notebooks, I integrated my story into a constructed narrative, a case study, and the meta-analysis within this thesis. All my notebooks, reports and diary entries are dated chronologically and even though I have a good photographic memory I used coloured strips to mark certain sections that I wanted to use later on in green (research focus) and pink (reflective). So, when I started writing, I went back to these sections continuously.

The following table presents an overview of data collection and type of data per time frame:

Period	Activity	Participants	Aim of activity	Data output specifics
2011-2016	Logging tasks, observations, ideas, thoughts, emotions, concerns, analyses of context.	Researcher	1. Reflection 2. To enable myself to go back to these notes instead of memory in case I would feel the need to write up my story I the future.	5 notebooks, Type: Moleskine (regular size). Secured in archival boxes.
2011-2015	Reviewing literature, analysing data and synthesising data, reflecting on my own development	Researcher	1. Writing CAL reports, 2. Writing DDP 3. Thesis proposal writing	10 CAL reports, 2000 words each ex ref; 80 weekly assignments with literature review and problematising write-ups (500-1000 words); weekly submissions to discussion boards (UOL, Blackboard) monitored by module tutor; 4 DDP clinic assignments (500 words each ex ref); final DDP (20000 words ex ref). Recorded in computer (MacBook) and cloud (Dropbox). Recorded in Liverpool University Blackboard database.

2015 (2018)	Personality testing	Researcher Third-party websites	1. Discovering personality type(s) and dark traits 2. Reflection upon triggers for derailment (prevention)	Data reports received from testing websites; notes in notebooks.
2016	Coaching	Coach Researcher	1. Guidance during period of assumed derailment and resignation at the branch 2. Development of self-regulation and self-reflection 3. Investigation into the impact of coaching on leadership behaviour in general, and behaviour of an assumed derailer	2 notebooks, type Moleskin.
2017-2018	Case narrative writing	Researcher	1. Adopting an outsider view on my behaviour 2. Immersion into thought processes of others in order to assess my own behaviour 3. Deeper investigation into context 4. Reflecting critically on biased thinking and assumptions,	Records stored in Word and PDF on computer (MacBook) and cloud (Dropbox, One Drive).

			as well as subjectivity 5. Knowledge creation	
2018	Creation of US-WE-ME model and presentation	Researcher	1. Synthesis of personal findings and theoretic insights 2. Knowledge creation 3. Actionable results 4. Visualisation of measures	Integrated in Thesis document in Word and PDF, recorded and stored on computer (MacBook) and cloud (Dropbox, One Drive).
2018	Final drafting of doctoral thesis and meta-analysis	Researcher	1. Synthesis of conclusions from AR 2. Contribution to academic knowledge 3. Proof of ability to perform applied research	Recorded in Word and PDF, stored on computer (MacBook) and Cloud (Dropbox, One Drive), and Liverpool University Blackboard database.

Figure 17: overview of data collection & methodology between 2011 and 2018

In addition, I visited online databases accessible through the University of Liverpool website and Google scholar. I also ordered (e)books to be read at home, such as Lombardo & Eichinger (1989)'s case study on rescuing derailed executives and Furnham (2010)'s book. I also bought Harvard Business Review magazines periodically. I referred regularly to books and articles acquired during the DBA programme on action research and qualitative research design. I also regularly visited official websites of the Qatari government such as www.gov.qa and www.mdps.gov.qa to gain access to the latest census figures and numbers.

3.5.4 Description of the action research

As 'action research can be thought of as a process consisting of at least two analytically distinct phases' (Greenwood & Levin, 2007, p.93), a cogenerative model was applied (p.94). The first phase is an early clarification of the research question and the second involves the instigation of a transformation and construction process (idem, p.93). This model includes two types of actors: the 'insider' who owns the problem and the 'outsider', the professional researcher who attempts to solve the problem and to make contributions to scientific discourse. As a researcher I identify with both the insider and the outsider, and consciously wear one hat or the other throughout the observations and AR. Even though cogeneration and a non-linear approach could lead to initial chaos, thinking in AR cycles eventually brought structure to the data. The attempt to answer the main research question in an appropriate research design was therefore divided into a parallel sequence of empirical elements and action research, with some loops between AR and going back to the problematizing phase. Figure 18 shows the entire AR cycle of the research design, with the step of Taking Action being divided into 3 AR cycles:

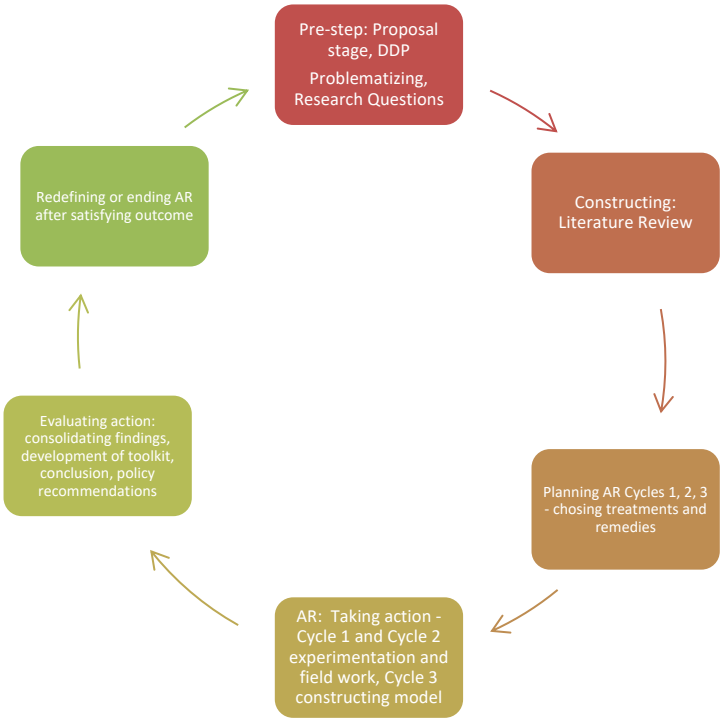


Figure 18: Overview of Research Process

Each step in the research was then constructed as follows:

1. The initiating step of the meta-AR cycle consists of **problematizing**, resulting in the doctoral development plan in May 2015, a final thesis proposal in December 2015 and ethics committee approval in May 2016. In my view, my submitted DDP is the first exercise in autoethnography, as it is highly reflective, descriptive and explanatory;
2. The second step of **constructing** is comprised of the extensive literature review, where I would attempt to peel down the problem and construct of derailment within the domains of organisational behaviour, leadership and business psychology, as well as suggested treatments and remedies emerging from scholarly works, resulting in a conceptual framework;
3. The next step consists of **planning** the next action research activities. I first chose easily accessible remedies such as personality testing to become aware of my own personality traits and related character flaws, complemented by coaching. The literature review and conceptual framework assisted in choosing remedies and activities. I aimed to continue planning for a next AR cycle until the results would be satisfactory such as leading to an application model and a toolkit;
4. '**Taking action'** would contain three AR cycles. As mentioned, the first AR cycle would focus on activities that are readily available for managers in terms of understanding who they are and how they act, by undergoing 3 personality tests that are available online and based on scientific research (MBTI, 9 personalities, Hogan Assessment), followed by 6 coaching sessions with a certified executive and life coach. The testing and coaching phase happened between 2015 and 2016, with an additional follow up test taken in 2018. During this cycle, I experimented on myself, grounding it into academic research and analysing its findings in order to come up with my own checklists for the toolkit. The second cycle would focus on a deepening of immersion into the subjective world of the researcher to develop a perspective from the outside in, by constructing the narratives and writing the cases. In terms of representation, I applied the coding templates from Creswell & Poth (2017; p.218). This cycle took place between 2016 and 2017. Both cycles would contain autoethnographic elements. The third cycle would focus on meta-analysis and actionable outcomes, resulting in the development of a tool kit, an illustrative model and workshop on preventing derailment initiated by practitioners themselves. This cycle occurred in 2017 and 2018.

This cycle would define the end of the AR cycles and would ensure to progress into the 'evaluating action'-step. Please review figure 19 for a representation of these action research cycles within step 4.

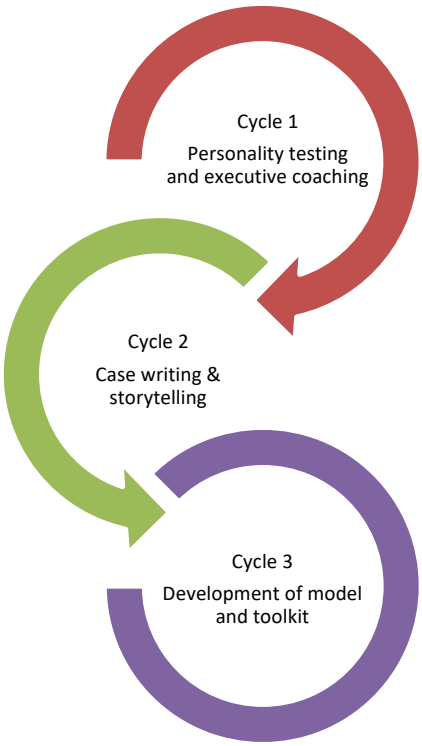


Figure 19: Representation of AR cycles

5. Evaluating Action would be based on a consolidation of findings and construction of the US-WE-ME model, the workshop and the toolkit, complemented by policy implications and further recommendations for application of the findings. After a satisfactory result, the whole research cycle would end here.

3.6 Quality and ethics

The notebooks served as memory support during reflections and creation of narratives, as I was fully aware of the restrictions of recollecting past events and experiences (Snoeren et al, 2016). The CAL reports were all peer reviewed and assessed by tutors during the modules based on university requirements of rigour and relevance. In addition, two thesis supervisors were asked to read the final thesis draft, including the narratives of the cases, checking on coherence, biased thinking, sincerity to readers, and relevance. As Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson (2012) state, it is quite possible for doctoral students 'to study their own work context

or observe their own colleagues using the opportunity as an insider', thereby often applying an auto-ethnographic approach (p.147).

In the proposal stage I had sought approval from the University of Liverpool ethics committee and received this in May 2016. Originally, as mentioned in the thesis proposal (Zwaanstra, 2015), I intended to work with an action learning-set in the second action research cycle to collect narratives regarding derailment experiences and observe and discuss treatments with the group. However, the political situation and tensions within the organisation grew in such a manner over the course of the data collection stage in 2016 that this original plan became impossible and I decided to minimize participation of others by adopting a first-person AR approach with autoethnographic elements in the second research cycle.

Privately, but not secretly, I kept log entries in notebooks that I later used as data for the case studies. Colleagues were aware of these notes and I regularly discussed observations, literature and findings. My study into derailment and leadership behaviour was clearly communicated to colleagues. Conversations were never recorded and (un)structured interviews were not used as research data. Names in all case studies and narratives were altered, to respect the wish and command of the school's previous Dean not to mention any real names nor the exact name of the business school throughout the thesis. Of course, while writing the case studies in order to get insight in the realities of my previous superiors, all the names were modified, and some characteristics were mixed to ensure that it would not be immediately obvious who the protagonist of the narrative was. These narratives are written from memory, notes and personal observations, and they contain statements about the country, office location, the staff members or the organisation in general can be verified easily. These statements were based on facts, derived from websites. During the self-investigatory phase with a coach I had always been open about my intentions of using the observations and results for my research. We discussed meta-analysis of the coaching sessions during coffee breaks.

Finally, in terms of recordkeeping, the handwritten journals that I kept as part of my observations were carefully kept at safe places. Even during the move from Qatar to the Netherlands they were transported in a fireproof suitcase (instead of a sea container). The

digital research files were always kept online in Dropbox, on a separate hard drive and on a standalone MacBook.

3.7 The limitations of doing research in your own organisation

The first limitation was accessibility and the second was organisational politics. At various stages of doing research I faced some limitations, which I attempted to solve by focusing on creative solutions. Whereas I received support from the leadership team when I started the DBA-programme, upon rotation of the leadership team the organisational politics had shifted to minimal support for activities done by an external researcher. I was suddenly perceived as an external researcher, because I was not part of the school's tenured faculty nor was I a seasoned senior researcher working at the branch campus.

Politics played an important role at the branch campus, as I briefly sketched in Chapter 1. There were tensions related to the partnership agreement and expectations from the home campus in terms of brand management and revenue streams. In addition, the political issues of the country itself in 2017 made me very sensitive to the implications of my research in relation to the school, the partner organisation and previous colleagues. I had to be very careful to speak in any negative form on the country or the school. The third limitation I was aware of was the issue of confirmation bias and other negative heuristics. I accepted some subjectivity and bias, as this would inform me about my own thought processes and hopefully would lead to better critical thinking.

Using and testing academic works, while being accompanied by a coach, and testing 'my reality' to (previous) colleagues were attempts to avoid too much bias. I was also very conscious about making unsupported statements. The final limitations were related to academic rigour and relevance. Doing insider, first person action research could become superficial, overly biased and opinionated without grounding it in academic theory. Also, I always aimed at generating meaningful data and to contribute to knowledge creation and professional practice. Focusing on the tool kit and workshops for master students helped me to stay grounded and always think in an academically critical manner. I realized that I could have chosen an 'easier' or more straightforward and less risky type of methodology, but this would not have resulted in such practice oriented, actionable results.

CHAPTER 4: Cycles of action research, data analysis and findings

4.1 Description of AR cycles

As discussed in the previous chapter, the action research cycles consisted of three elements: autoethnography, case study and the development of a toolkit based on a new model. These cycles started with thesis proposal writing (red arrow), followed by (auto)ethnographic field work (cycle 1), continued with case study writing and analysis (cycle 2), after which a model and toolkit were developed (cycle 3). The AR ended with findings and conclusions (green arrow):

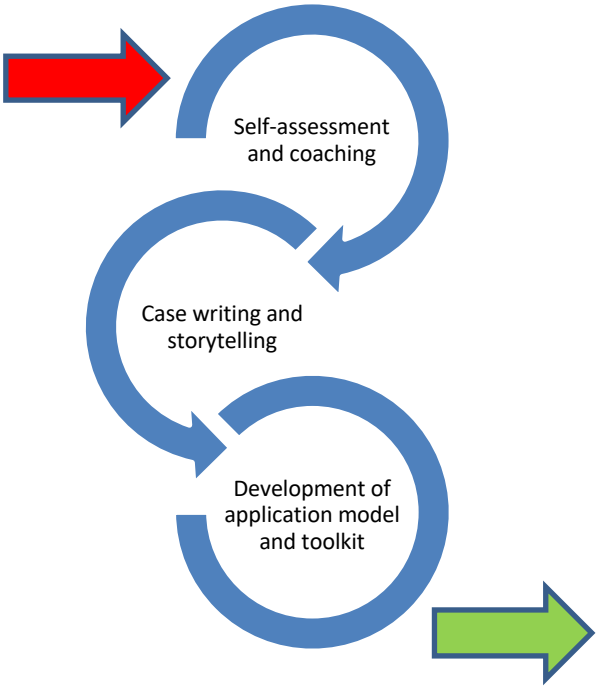


Figure 20: The three major cycles of action research in this study

Within these major cycles I also followed an action research process of constructing, planning, taking action, evaluating action and a redefinition of context and purpose.

4.2 Pre-Step: proposal writing

According to Coghlan & Brannick (2010; p.8), a pre-step takes place before any action research, which is understanding the context of the project. It aims to understand why this project is necessary, and which forces are driving the desired change. Once defined, the researcher needs to define a desired future state (idem). The purpose of my research project was written down in the original thesis research proposal and defined as:

"With this study I expect to gain insight on how challenging it is to accept (potential) derailment behaviour as a manager, sub-consequently as a female executive and as an organisational member of an international company, and how a manager experiences any form of 'treatment'." (Manon Zwaanstra, DBA Thesis Proposal, University of Liverpool, December 2015)

The final research proposal was the result of five revisions, as circumstances demanded that the problem definition, and the methodology had to be adapted. The first research proposal and the initial idea of studying derailment originated in observations in my work environment regarding dysfunctional national (local) and expat (foreign) managers while living in Qatar. Due to a positive discrimination labour law that existed called Qatarization, a large-scale localisation of human resources, many nationals had received promotions quite early in their career replacing highly specialized foreign employees. The replacement of expats by often less experienced individuals was resulting in frustration on both sides, which in my view contained a huge potential for future derailment behaviour in many organisations. According to information on the Qatar Foundation website[5], Qatarization aims at positions that are 'integral to the business plans of private and public-sector entities'. Therefore, in Qatar Foundation and many other local companies the policy is to ensure that 50% of a directorate or a business unit exists of nationals, and preferably in 'meaningful employment' (i.e. managerial positions). This is interesting, as the population in Qatar exists for almost 90% out of foreign workers[6], and less than 8% of the indigenous population is economically active. After serving almost two years as a department head and managing corporate projects successfully, I was also replaced by a Qatari national who had no experience in the field, which gave me a first-hand experience on the frustration felt of being replaced based on merits instead of failures. After seeing the impact of this law on many other foreign individuals as well as businesses, I sincerely wanted to study its future impact on leadership positions, organisational behaviour and the local economy. I hoped to be able to work with nationals and expats alike in a think-tank structure (or action learning set) to find ways to prevent costly

[5] See: https://www.qf.org.qa/content/about/jobs/qatarization (Visited 26-10-2018)
[6] The exact number after a recent census in 2017 was 88%. See: https://www.mdps.gov.qa/en/statistics1/StatisticsSite/Pages/Population.aspx (Visited 26-10-2018)

consequences of derailing leaders. It is still a hot topic on any political and research agenda in Qatar, even though it is also a very sensitive issue. Scholarly articles have been published on the localization of human resources strategies across the GCC, and its economic advantages versus disadvantages and the failure of reaching the national targets, such as Williams et al (2011), but this national human resource strategy as a potential for derailment in particular has received no attention in scholarly literature so far. The results of a study on derailment potential could help to inform the selection, promotion and training strategies, especially of the indigenous workforce, not only in Qatar, but in the whole region as this particular law exists in most of the Arab Gulf states.

After careful review of my intentions and the scope of this research project, valuable to the country and the region as may be, I decided that it was too large for a doctoral thesis project. Also, the feasibility of this project was very low at the time due to limited access to useful and reliable sources and participants. Narrowing down my scope, I then decided to focus on my own organisation, leaving local laws and politics out of the study and aiming at understanding the phenomenon of derailment itself within my own professional context. Later on, due to internal politics and circumstances, I narrowed down the research even further towards self-inquiry driven research on derailment prevention. The following picture shows the steps during framing, reframing and problematizing, ending in autoethnographic research which will be discussed in the next paragraph:

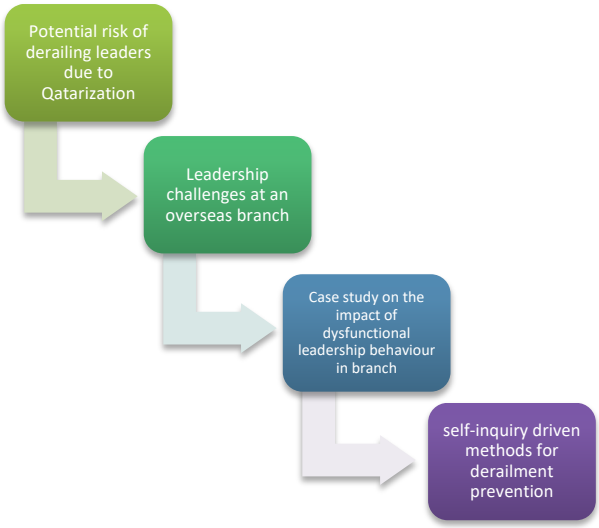


Figure 21: Problematizing process

4.3 Cycle 1: Autoethnographic study

This self-observant and self-investigative phase was designed to answer the first research question – whether and how someone can recognize their own derailment, and which type of analysis is most suitable for self-inquiry and reflection, and which boundaries/limitations exist in detecting and treating one's own derailment behaviour.

4.3.1 Constructing

The constructing phase contained a few elements: initial self-reflection, informing, problematizing, forming and phrasing. To me, self-reflection is a form of diagnosis, even though I accept that a true objectivistic type of medical diagnosis (Schein, 1999) is not possible, as the object is I (*ego*) and I am biased towards myself. As Coghlan & Brannick (2010) indicate, meanings also change over time as well as the understanding of events that led to a certain situation (p.9). Initial self-reflection led to a positive change of perspective in terms of the problem and the research design. This change of perspective was brought about by the restrictions imposed by my superiors to study and do action research with the senior leadership team (or anyone else) in the company. The aim of the study (originally: finding effective 'treatments' for derailment from an organisational perspective) could not be reached without working overtly with volunteering colleagues. When I realized - after a thought experiment of thinking the opposite to find out what my blind spot was - that I might have been studying the problem from a possibly 'wrong' angle (others were derailing not I), I decided to focus on self-inquiry or first person action research - which also solved the problem of not being able to do any collective action research at the overseas branch.

From reviewing the literature, I had learned that the key to many derailment prevention studies is self-awareness (Gentry, 2007) and also mindfulness (Seiling & Hinrichs, 2005). Self-awareness and mindfulness also have an obvious relationship with the individual reflective study during action research as explained by Coghlan & Brannick (2019). As I was limited to self-inquiry during the construction and design of the research project, I started with careful self-reflection through reading the work journals I had kept during the previous five years and continuing to write down reflections while in parallel finding scholarly work on the issues that emerged.

During the problematizing part of my study into derailment and finding out which treatments would actually work in my specific professional context, I started to understand that I would never be able to find strong causal relationships with the attempted collective action learning with colleagues and larger scale organizational improvements in my organization. Furthermore, I was considering that top management would not authorize me to work on a sensitive and political topic such as derailment, which would be disruptive to the status quo of the branch. It would also be interesting to enhance the theory-practice bridging relevance factor by adding a first-person perspective to the study.

By reviewing the literature and some informal probing of acclaimed faculty members teaching Leadership (and derailment), I went on an early exploration quest to assess the different options I had to detect, treat or prevent derailment. Initially, I gained knowledge through reading published articles I found on academic databases and in popular magazines (such as Harvard Business Review). The scholarly works of Michael Lombardo and the Center for Creative Leadership became leading in my further research (as can be read in chapter 2 containing the literature review). I decided to buy Lombardo's books on preventing leadership derailment. In previous critical action learning reports, I had already frequently used Carson et al (2012)'s article on the relationship between dysfunctional tendencies, negative characteristics, derailment and employee turnover. I had tried to contact Dr Carson to question her, but without success. My initial literature review on the 'current state of thinking', as I called it, seemed to be quite unstructured, lacking focus and scaffolding. The framework massively improved when I decided to organise the theory from different perspectives: organisation, team/group, individual. My initial review only marginally focused on solutions and workable actions, and instead was quite descriptive and explanatory by nature. I had to revise the literature review structure multiple times to be satisfied with the content. It helped to discuss the theoretic framework with 'laymen' (i.e. friends and family), in order to find out what I knew and what was still unknown or unclear. I wrote down all my findings in my Moleskine notebooks and referred to these notes frequently. I told myself to focus on 'what is appropriate in my situation?' And I wondered: 'do organisations and managers even care about derailment?' Eventually, Lombardo's (1989) and Furnhams (2010) books provided with the pragmatic focus I needed. To summarize, I was able to come up with some definitions to detect, prevent and treat leadership derailment, as shown in figure 21.

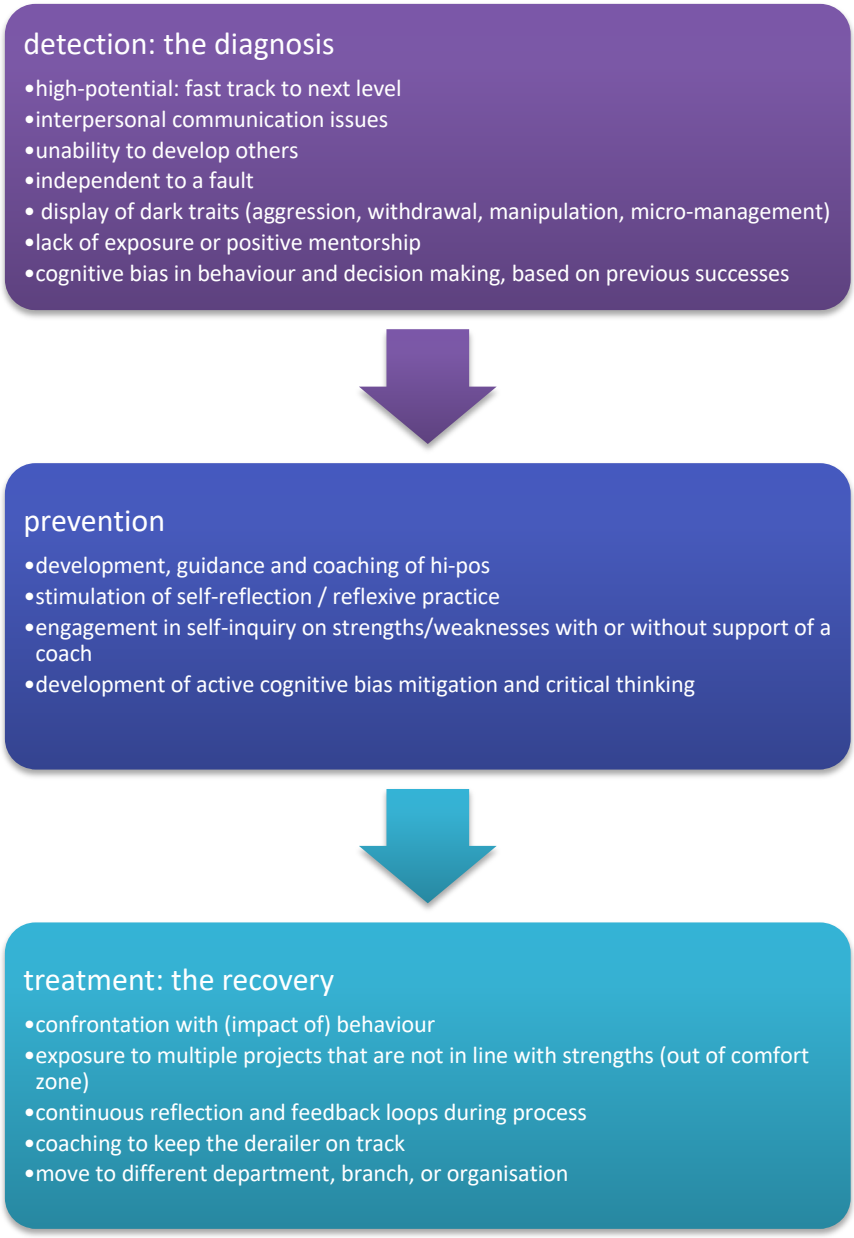


Figure 21: High-level early summary of derailment detection, prevention and treatment

The next step was to see which mechanisms were implemented in my organisation that could prevent derailment from happening and thus also detect my own derailment in an early stage. Except for gaining more theoretical knowledge, I could not find a satisfying solution I felt comfortable working with, until I spoke to an executive coach in a period when the situation at work became full of tensions and reached a peak in terms of miscommunications, frustrations and demotivation. Figure 22 reflects the framing process in my own words and in sequence of problematizing.

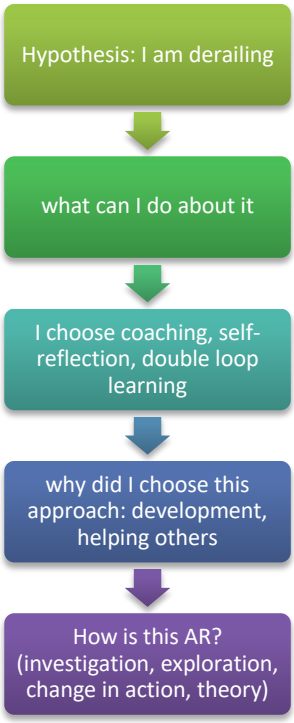


Figure 22: framing process

4.3.2 Planning

After an attempt to understand the problem of derailment, by forming a definition with checklist, and by listing measures to prevent and recover derailing individuals, it was time to plan the action research. Part of action research is to plan for the changes carefully and decide on a desired state as Coghlan & Brannick (2010) mention. It was helpful to think in these terms of change management and formulate a *desired* future me. In order to reach this, I had to look at my *actual* state, the status quo.

4.3.3 Acting

Scholars agree on the fact that destructive behaviour leading towards derailment originates in personality disorders, individual triggers and particular organisational circumstances (Hogan et al, 2010; Carson et al, 2012). As can be concluded from the literature review, in order to understand one's own derailment potential, it is essential to be aware of their own personality and in particular their flaws. As my aim has always been to help others and understand the complexity and challenge of self-initiated behavioural change, I focused on what is available rather than seeking professional psychiatric advice during the first AR cycle.

Part of this exploration was trying several free personality tests available online, such as a Myers-Briggs (MBTI) and 16Personalities (16PF) test, alongside Quin's octogram and Ofman's Core Quality Quadrant. What I learned was, that these tests and models gave a somewhat accurate impression of how I was in a particular context and time. In personality testing, consistency of results and measures could become a problem, therefore I had chosen to use the open source Neris Type Explorer ™ test available online. The company applies the 'Cronbach Alpha'-coefficient, which measures whether questions belonging to the same scale produce similar scores. Neris (2018) mentions that the scales on their personality test produce reliable 'alpha measures' when using a sample of 10.000 respondents, making it quite reliable. Austin & Murray (1993) already studied the personalities of derailed leaders by applying the 16PF method, as it is a test that is showing reliable results across demographic populations, and therefore they prefer it above the MBTI. These business psychologists also stress the importance of using the 16PF as 'a vehicle to provide genuine help', indicating that it does not define a person but instead should be used as guidance (idem; p.58). Another reason to stick to the Neris-test was that my organisation used this particular testing method during professional courses while I was working there as it is easily accessible with clear explanations and an attractive website. Concerning re-testing, variation over a longer period is expected, according to Neris (2018), but should still remain reliable. According to McDonald & Eeden (2014), home language has an impact on doing personality tests, so I also decided to stick to English, the original language of the 16PF and MBTI tests. When I did the test in 2015 and 2018, I observed traits within the same domain (i.e. Diplomat), but with slightly different scores on the scale of prospecting and judging (i.e. both times very close to 50%). I am clearly an extrovert (90%) and an assertive person (68%), which is not a surprise. If I would incline more towards (strategic) Thinking instead of Feeling, I would be described as an ENTJ-A, a Commander, but the tests show that I am an ENFP-A or a Campaigner, as well as a ENFJ-A, a Protagonist, and both outcomes seem correct to me.

However, in 2015 and in 2018 this was not the case. The results were different, as can be seen in figure 24.

Year	Result	Meaning	Strengths	Weaknesses
2015	***ENPF-A,*** *The Campaigner*	Extroverted (E), intuitive (N), feeling (F), prospecting (P) – assertive (A)	Curious, observant, energetic & enthusiastic, excellent communicators, know how to relax, popular & friendly	poor practical skills, difficulty to focus, overthink things, highly emotional, get stressed easily, independent to a fault.
2018	***ENFJ-A,*** *The Protagonist*	Extroverted (E), intuitive (N), feeling (F), judging (J) – assertive (A)	Tolerant, reliable, charismatic, altruistic, natural leaders	overly idealistic, too selfless, too sensitive, fluctuating self-esteem, struggle to make tough decisions

Figure 24. Comparison of 2015 and 2018 16PF/MBTI tests

When making an early comparison to the table as mentioned in Carson et al (2012), one could conclude that there were noticeable factors having derailment potential:

Year	Positive initial traits leading to success	Dark traits developing over time towards derailment
2015	Curiosity, enthusiasm, extroversion, assertiveness, communication, independence	Aggression, manipulation, emotional outbursts, withdrawal, moving away from people.
2018	Charismatic, reliable, tolerant, team-player, sensitive to organisational politics.	Indecisiveness, sensitivity, eagerness to please, sense of entitlement

Figure 25: comparison of personality to dysfunctional tendencies

Critical notes on personality testing

Nelson & Hogan (2009) posit that personality testing and assessment can be informative for both executives as well as their coaches and certain dominant characteristics can even predict leader effectiveness (p.9). Nevertheless, it is also meeting a lot of criticism due to the fact that there is a risk of pigeonholing individuals into certain definitive personality types and the outcomes are subjective and experienced as 'true' (Stein & Swan, 2019; p. 4). Nevertheless, as these scholars strongly suggest, tests like the MBTI could still be useful as discussion topic (during class or coaching sessions) on conflicting personalities and different types of people. Instead of presenting a personality type as an unchanging aspect of your being, it does help to explain why people act the way they do or which types are more prone to aggression,

withdrawal or overenthusiasm. Awareness of certain darker traits does allow colleagues and coaches to respond or intervene effectively, and gives individuals better insight into their own behaviour, according to Nelson & Hogan (2009). The authors suggest using the advanced (and expensive) Hogan Assessment scales rather than MBTI, but of course there are many other assessment tools available online and for free, such as Neris' 16Personalities. I decided to use these tools to become more aware of my own personality, how it altered over time, and how it can assist me in becoming more aware of negative aspects of my personality.

Intervention attempt: *coaching*

The intervention that I chose for self-inquiry into my own dysfunctional behaviour and derailment potential was to include an executive coach, to assist me in becoming more self-aware and to provide with guidance into looking critically at my own actions, ways of communications and other types of behaviour. A colleague recommended the coach to me. The coach had also worked with the branch on developing a business case for executive education on their local group coaching practice called 'Empower People'. We agreed on five to ten sessions and before each session I would formulate a question or professional issue we would be working on, either by exploring and deepening behavioural understanding or by taking action. In my journals I recorded what we did, how I felt, whether it changed anything, how it related to academic literature and what happened next.

On 13th June 2016, I met the executive coach for our first intensive and highly emotional session. I discovered my core values (freedom, flexibility, helping others, wanting to contribute) and found out that the circumstances at work were blocking my thesis progress and numbing my emotions in general. I felt uninspired towards things that would otherwise motivate me. From my journal (d.d. 13th June 2016): *'I can keep on doing this [working at the branch, red.] for another year, even though I don't feel valued and appreciated for what I am'.*

On 15th June I entered the following: 'Try to find literature about personal values….about coaching', taking the role of the researcher by assessing and exploring what I felt and whether I saw any changes happening. The next day, this session inspired me to start exploring why I always encounter problems with leadership (i.e. my superiors) and finding out whether I was even in the right job or organisation. In other words, this session explored the idea of being

(part of) the problem. Afterwards, I decided to take a step back and observe the process and ground this in academic research. I wanted to become my own fly on the wall while taking an active part in the coaching sessions. I decided to become informed by reading about coaching techniques and the topics that emerged (numbing, personal values), while also aiming at story telling.

Two days later, I started wondering whether derailment was a form of self-sabotage, whether this dysfunctional behaviour happened on purpose, as a way of wanting to be heard, by throwing a rock in a lake and seeing what the ripples would do? *'Is it a self-inflicted illness?'* I revisited literature on self-leadership (Manz, 1986), as my coach wanted me to 'meet the inner leader' and positively influence the way I communicate and behave in the workplace by being mindful about my emotions. After two sessions, I observed two things. Firstly: you can only be coached if you have goals and you are willing to reflect, to unblock, to go with the flow and open up; and secondly that I already felt more peaceful, calm, and aware than before. I immediately went back to reading more about coaching and the impact of coaching on the organisational problem.

According to Nelson & Hogan (2009), p. 10: 'coaching is a form of leadership development'. It aims at recognizing and modifying ineffective interpersonal strategies or behaviour, thereby enhancing existing skills and potential, and it can serve as 'preventive maintenance' to reduce the likelihood of problems emerging in the future and discovers flawed mental modes. According to Badaracco (1992), any individual initiating change and intervention should reflect strongly on their own ethical beliefs and moral standards on several levels.

I observed in July that coaching sessions were a form of planned change and 'internal consultancy' similar to AR while going through complex messy times, following the process of problematizing, planning, acting and evaluating. It became valuable to investigate whether being coached was affecting my behaviour and thus, indirectly, the organisation.

Arriving at my third session, I wanted to know more about the methods my coach was using. In parallel, I felt the urge to analyse what my coach's dominant psychological model was, based on her preferences. I read that, according to Kauffman (2016), effectiveness of coaching

can be enhanced if coaches are familiar with multiple models. I was eager to discover what the dominant psychological model was of my coach.

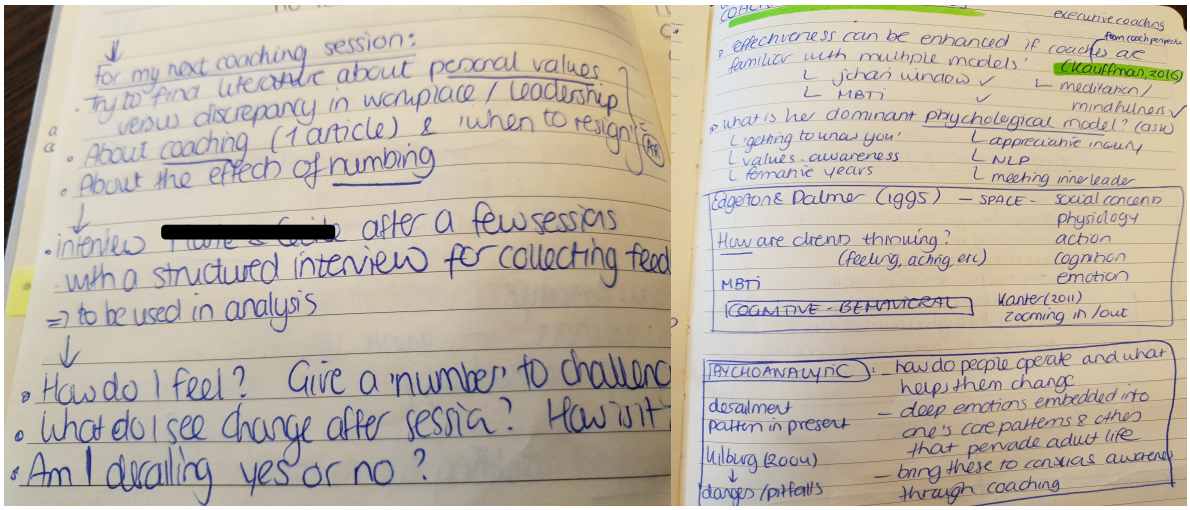


Figure 26: Diary entries from June and July 2016

During our sessions, we made use of the Johari-window model (Luft & Ingham, 1961), mindfulness exercises and personality testing. The keywords/phrases I wrote down were: 'getting to know you'; values; awareness; formative years; appreciative inquiry; NLP; 'meeting your inner leader'. Then I compared this with Kauffman (2016)'s overview of models: Cognitive-Behavioural (1), Psychoanalytic (2), Positive Psychology (3), and Adult Development (4). Comparing these with the first two sessions, I discovered that there was not one dominant model, but that all the models were used in each session. Figure 27 shows the models used in each session and demonstrates that the coach was skilled and trained to help me uncover truths from different perspectives:

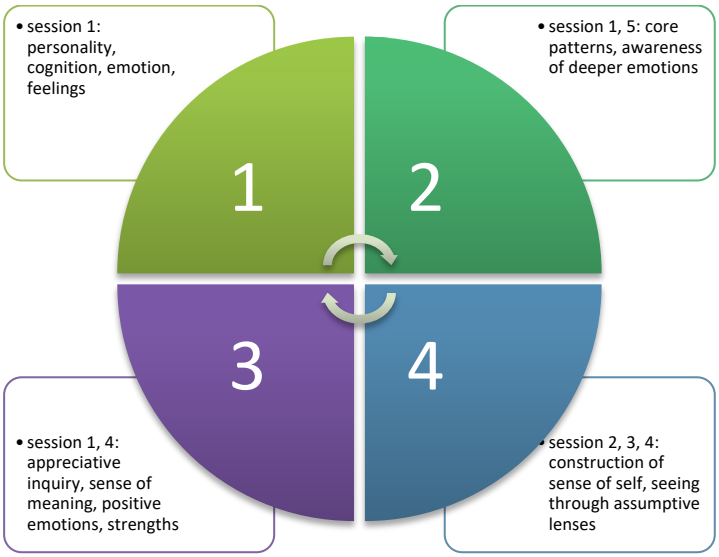


Figure 27: Model vs methods used during executive coaching in 2016

4.3.4 Evaluating action: ending the coaching sessions

After a few sessions, I arrived at a point where I became annoyed by the predictability of each session, after having read so much about the different techniques and models that coaches may use, and the efficacy and risk of using psychological models (Kilburg, 2004). Also, I felt I had not really found an effective way to treat derailment by undergoing coaching, even though I had learned a lot about myself and how I reacted in certain situations. I felt I needed to go one step further, as I still missed the tools to deal with certain situations in the future. According to Witherspoon (2014) there are three phases in 'double loop coaching' (DLC): reflect, reframe and redesign (p.266). The author states that coaches need to facilitate the ability of leaders to decide whether and how to change their leadership behaviour and should deliberately practice that behaviour.

The coaching sessions contained many mindfulness exercises. According to Lee (2012), mindfulness training can support the development of 'high-potentials' and mitigate their derailment (p.30). These mindfulness exercises did produce changes in my behaviour towards colleagues and superiors as it increased self-awareness and highlighted flawed perceptions, so I decided to park this in my notes under 'useful practice'. However, this positive change was only temporary. Even though I tried hard to avoid displaying dark personality traits, I was feeling increasingly stressed and emotional after the summer of 2016. In retrospect, I was not interested to change and be rescued at the time, as I felt unsupported by my boss. I wrote in my diary in June and in August that I was feeling upset for being misunderstood: '*R tells L that*

I am resistant to change and that I am comfortable with my workload and […] I feel framed by R's games. I don't accept this, I don't want to be in that team while it has been decided for me, I feel undervalued and not appreciated for what I do and apparently [I am] not visible enough'. The next coaching session we focused on accurate descriptions of who I am and what my values are, and what I can offer, which improved my self-image and self-confidence at the time. However, in September and October tensions and miscommunications increased again and culminated into my resignation in November.

4.3.5 Reflecting

The impact and effect of personality testing and coaching was not that it had prevented a crisis, and the positive effects were only temporarily. Coaching gave me the confidence to address my concerns to senior leadership about a new role and function that I did not want. After reviewing my strengths and competencies, I felt confident to leave the organisation and find a new position elsewhere. In retrospect, coaching gave me the courage to avoid further escalation (of commitment) and to leave the organisation. Leaving the organisation can very well be a final step in rescuing a derailing individual as it takes a person out of the organisational context, and out of the sphere of tensions, to avoid further damage to the business. Interestingly, Lombardo & Eichinger (1989) refer to this as a final escape strategy, implying that not everyone should be rescued.

So, personality testing and coaching did lead to a greater understanding and analysis of my own behaviour and the changes necessary to avoid derailment. However, as Nelson & Hogan (2009; p. 9) contend, coaches should also be equally aware of and be able to recognize dark traits and dysfunctional tendencies in order to effectively enhance self-awareness of derailment and to find effective strategies for intervention. Therefore, from this experience I concluded that it is a collective team effort of coach and coachee and cannot merely be an individual exercise to become meaningful.

4.3.5 Redefining context and purpose

The next step would be to transform these observations and findings into pedagogical and educational materials to help others in similar situations. I decided to write a series of narratives about derailment and dysfunctional behaviours within my organisation, in order to review my role in this organisational problem and to analyse personal and professional

context. I had already become familiar with case writing while being the editor for local cases for executive education at the branch. This case study writing and the analytical process of the narrative marks cycle two.

4.4 Cycle 2: Case study writing, storytelling and analysis

Cycle two followed a similar AR process as cycle one, namely: informing, planning, acting, evaluating and redefining context and purpose. It was designed to investigate research question R2: 'Which factors impacted derailment potential and possible solutions in my organisational context?'

4.4.1 Constructing

During this phase, I first collected research data and categorized and organized the documents and multiple sources available online. I decided to read all my journals containing notes about events and occurrences on a daily, weekly and monthly basis, between January 2012 and December 2016. I also reviewed all the critical action learning reports that I submitted for the DBA modules, as well as the doctoral development plan, containing valuable information about what happened during this period, which problems emerged and which measures we took to solve the issues. I created an overview, which can be read in Appendix 1.

4.4.2 Planning

The overview of critical action learning reports, the doctoral development plan, and actual events led to a chronological narrative about these five years at the branch as well as the two years before in a different position at the partner organisation. I had the feeling that my story could also inform others in similar situations. I decided to write several cases, categorized in three points of time: the period just before I joined the business school, the early years of being a project manager for executive education and the few months before my resignation. In my diary I wrote early June 2016:

'Tel(ling) the story of being in a managerial role for the first time (naïve) without guidance, boss who had no clue, new country & culture. Blowouts, fallouts, meltdowns. Then received promotion and derailing herself, me having learned & developed, set back, resigned, re-hired, hoping for better function, mediocre development, no strategy, uncomfortable selection committees, now a turning point: what to do?'

While I was writing down the chronological events in a more structure manner, I became curious to finding out what would have gone on inside the head of my bosses and how they could have seen me as one's own perception is often flawed and biased. My aim was to develop a kind of storytelling that would help others finding out what could have gone on inside another person's head to enable oneself to look at one's own behaviour and response during a specific crucial event. Seeing yourself though the eyes of someone else, especially a person who was shouting to you, or ignoring you, or diminishing or disrespecting you, would help re-evaluating the event and the situation and reflecting upon your own behaviour, I reasoned.

By that time, I had gained a lot of experience in case writing and editing, as I had worked closely with professors who developed case studies for executive education and who mentored me into writing good cases. I decided to apply the teaching case form that I had learned from a local faculty member and whose book I have used since then as a reference (Adler & Amann, 2011). I also aimed to write useful cases that could be applied in management education and during future workshops.

4.4.3 Taking action

At the start of the writing process, I cut the chronological narrative into three pieces and attached to each phase a narrative as told through the lens of my previous bosses. In addition, I sketched the case narratives along the coding templates of Creswell & Poth (2017, p.218).

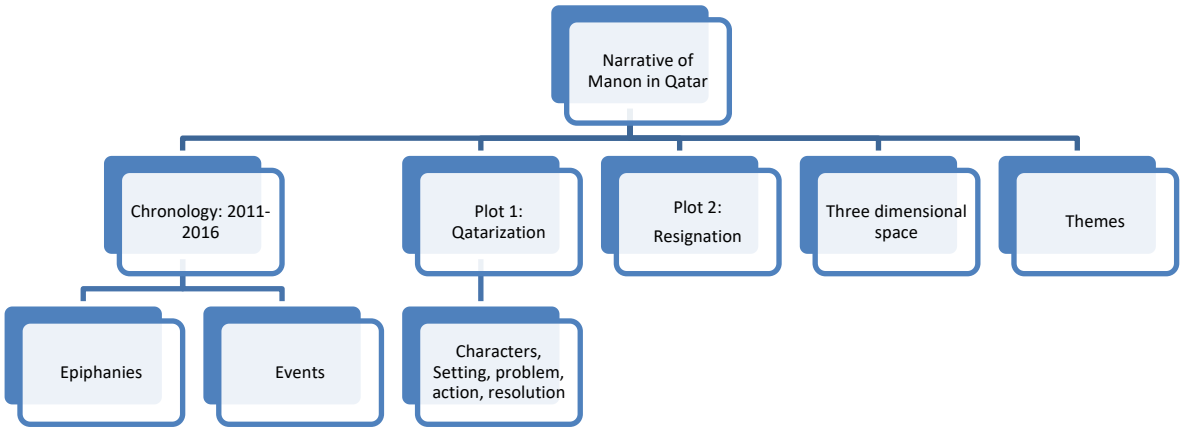


Figure 28: Coding of the narratives based on Creswell & Poth (2017)

It must be noted that, for ethical reasons, I changed their real names into fictive names and sometimes combined a few characteristics of several people to protect the anonymity of the key figures. It must also be noted that the sequence of writing (i.e. the creative process) is not in line with chronology of events, as I first started writing about the final event, my resignation. The reason for this is that I needed to start writing about the climax of the story, the situation where tensions between the key players (my line managers) led up to the protagonist's increased unease and frustration, as well as my own resignation. After setting the stage, I felt it was important to review earlier patterns as it felt that I had had recurring issues with my line managers. Then, I started writing my own story, as a framework for the sub-narratives. I decided to link my chronological narrative to the character stories.

Summing up, my business case consists of three narratives, which I will discuss and analyse in the following order:

A. Coming to Qatar into my first managerial roles and derailing (story of Manon)
B. The young director's dilemma – on being Qatarized and moving into a new career and organisation (story of Hafiz)
C. Tensions in the organisation & resignation (story of Roger)

4.4.3.1 Cases A & B: Coming to Qatar and the young director's dilemma

Discussing the narrative of the first case, Manon is the protagonist and the reader follows her actions and development throughout these 7 years. We learn to understand that she was a talented junior consultant and specialist in the Netherlands, seeing a positive role model in her CEO. After moving to Qatar, she developed from transactional towards authentic leadership. From case A, page 2:

"But there seemed to be a dark side to her development. Due to her renewed focus and increased knowledge of business and management, she was developing at a faster pace than her organisation. Her own transformation in an unchanged organisation led to daily frustrations and annoyance. Manon became irritated quickly during her daily meetings with her boss. She became convinced that he was less able and capable than her, as he lacked insight and strategic vision. She knew that he was just a few years older than her, and the reason why he took on this role was based on his family and tribe status within the organisation. Surely, she would be better at his job, she thought often."

For this storyline, I specifically use the terminology common to describe derailing executives as mentioned in Hogan et al (2010), focusing on dark personality traits, such as the development at a faster pace, quick irritation, daily frustrations and seeing someone else as less capable.

The narrative then changes perspective in case B and the reader is placed inside the director's head, the protagonist named Hafiz, which is not his real name and who is actually based on several local people I worked with in order to ensure that the protagonist cannot be identified. This is deliberate as the case is written with the sole purpose of discussing and recognizing certain behaviour and patterns. The case writing style has a first-person narrative, a monologue or stream of consciousness, which is based on an imaginary, but very possible, self-reflection attempt of the protagonist. As my colleagues and I had many conversations and bilateral meetings in our offices at the time, discussing all concerns about the organisation, staff members, politics or management gurus, it is quite possible that it could have taken place in a similar fashion in reality. The events are therefore very real as observed and perceived by me. They are partly written from memory, except for one part; the discussion on the decision-making and reporting processes was derived from my first DBA critical action learning report in 2012. In that Module 1 paper, I also noted the inevitability of leaving the organisation, after displaying 'behaviour of wanting to do things my own way', which 'alienated me from my own management' (Zwaanstra, 2012; p.5).

On page 2, Case A then describes the build up towards going off track:

"Over the course of two years, when the pressure became very high to perform and complete her corporate projects successfully, Manon had become increasingly frustrated and hot headed. She often openly disagreed with senior executives about decisions they had made or policies they had signed off on. She often felt she did not get the trust and opportunity to do what she wanted to do, as she could not convince her boss to take a certain strategic direction and, on top of this, he had limited knowledge about what she was doing or the importance of it. She started to withdraw in her office, hearing her team members speak in Arabic amongst each other. Every start and end of the working week they met and discussed issues of their projects. So, she had the feeling that her management style was working, even though she was not part of the team."

When a new executive director came on board, her life changed, and levels of stress increased.

As a writer, writing this case was a difficult exercise due to the emotional impact of being replaced by a local purely based on merits and having an assigned role for 'Qatarization'. Of course, in practice Qatarization was often used to replace individuals who were resisting or bold. Case A is therefore important as a narrative, because it was my first experience with feelings of immense frustration and stress towards my line manager and my first experience with destructive behaviour (assertiveness, emotional outbursts, withdrawal).

Being suddenly 'Qatarized' was very traumatic, even though in hindsight I had started to withdraw and develop dark traits many months before. When looking at the studies of Carson, Lombardo and Hogan, and the overall process of turning strengths into dark traits, I can conclude that I overly relied on previous successes (single strengths) as a consultant in information management, was unable to connect with my line manager because I saw him as an ineffective leader without sufficient knowledge, that I acted too independently, and couldn't make the transition into a more complex role. In the end, I even acted aggressively towards colleagues from ICT and to the other senior managers.

"Manon had had a few fallouts with the ICT department and even though her team members worked hard, she only seemed to be hiding in her office." (Appendix 1, Case A-2)

According to Lombardo & Eichinger (1989) the emergence of dark traits leads to trouble, but this does not mean I was derailing already. Personally, I am convinced that I was being let go by 'Hafiz' and 'Amir' just before disaster happened.

To summarize the themes in Case A and B, I was unable to get things done after a period of almost two years and was convinced that my superior was less competent than I was. This was based on an assumption of a lack of knowledge or strategic insight. I had just moved to Qatar and was seen as a high-potential consultant, with very specialized knowledge from my previous job. It was my task to set up a new department and lead a corporate project. It would become clear, in derailment terminology, that (a) I relied too much on previous successes and strengths and (b) I was not helping my own line manager either by questioning his strategic decisions constantly. This case should point out the early derailment tendencies that were being cultivated and some dark elements in my personality traits.

The set timeframe, 2009-2011, is the preface of my five years at the business school branch. These two years would become very important in terms of my own leadership development. Previously, I had advised department heads and project managers as an external consultant, and now it was time to follow my own advice. Organisational politics turned out to be more difficult than I had expected and anticipated for and managing others and forming a team were new skills to be learned. I learned by doing (i.e. failing) and by receiving education (i.e. starting the Doctor of Business Administration programme).

The time after Qatarization shaped my belief systems and expectations of appropriate leadership behaviour. It is crucial to look at traits developing over time, as Carson et al (2012) suggest, because only then some dark traits and dysfunctional tendencies start to emerge. When reading the two narratives, it becomes clear that my strengths eventually would become weaknesses. These dark traits developed under times of pressure and uncertainty, when she had to become comfortable in a new role and learn a new profession in a different organisation.

To me in this situation it was nearly impossible to admit to not knowing what to do, or not having knowledge and skills in a certain area. In this environment she did not want to show any signs of weakness, of being incapable of the new position and/or level within the organisation. In 2017, after starting a new job in the Netherlands, I had come to realise that almost everyone who starts a new job doesn't know everything and that it is fine to feel insecure for a while.

4.4.3.2 Case C - Stuck in the Middle

Case C tells the story of senior leadership behaviour looking at my behaviour from a first-person perspective. It also tells the story of the last 6 months of my career at the branch, set in the historical background of the development of the overseas branch. The protagonist, again a combination of several people who cannot be easily identified, had a major influence on all operations at the branch. It starts with a description of what had happened and how he felt:

"… he wondered what went wrong this time and what he could have done differently, but his mind was so caught up with the pile of things that needed his attention straight away that he felt that he never had enough time to step back and think. He had noticed that he started to close his door more

frequently, pretending that he had tons of work to do, but he often found himself staring at his screen or staring at the construction site below. He felt frustration and anger. He just received a resignation letter by one of his female managers."

In the case, it is mentioned that his focus is on making the branch profitable and he aims to reach this objective by cutting down on employee costs, such as by delaying the replacement of some middle and senior level managers, by hiring more lower level employees, by limiting training and development of staff members, and by investing most of his time to selling customized programs to corporate clients. The protagonist is a typical person who takes on too many roles and responsibilities for his senior level, not willing to delegate, which leads to frustration and stress. In the storyline his own boss shouts at him a lot, making him feel frustrated and leaving him to worry even more about politics and strategic goals. I could imagine that, due to this brooding and absence of mind, he was not aware of other issues that were playing such as an employee resigning. At the time, I witnessed a lot of loud voices and tense conversations, which sparked my imagination in terms of the conversations that took place behind closed doors.

In short, I really tried to look at the actual tense situation I was in from a different lens, that of my superiors. It greatly helped sympathizing with these previous bosses during the story construction process and investigating assumptions and claims. Only by looking to the world through their lenses, and pushing away my own, it became possible to sympathize with them and observe my own behaviour and communication style at the same time. The protagonist in this context therefore also represents the impact of leadership behaviour on the branch's employees at all levels, and the effect of having to checks and balances in place to mitigate destructive behaviour, as Furnham (2010) suggests. I felt very frustrated by the fact that there was no personal and professional development, even though regular feedback loops could have signalled some behavioural issues on time. Understanding my derailment potential as a complex combination of triggers and traits therefore impacts the analysis towards leadership behaviour having a large organisational impact and provides a possible answer to the question whether I was part of inflicting the problem on the organisation, or whether the problem was part of me.

To conclude, the three cases demonstrated long term patterns in my behaviour:

- Judgmental towards superiors and line managers
- Difficulty in managing upwards
- Emotional outbursts based on frustration
- Lack of mentorship / good examples
- (Over-)reliance on strengths, previous successes and knowledge

During the next 'evaluation action' phase I further reflected upon the experience during the creative process and afterwards. These reflections were being written down in a special journal for meta-analysis on the research itself. From this meta-analysis journal, June 2016 (undated):

'Questions for reflection: (solving problem through action)

1. what is present? Distinguish between objective and descriptive.

2. what is changing? Record this.

3. How/what can I do to influence my organisation?

4. What triggers derailment? Visualize!'

And: *'there are many challenges of changing, improving, self-reflecting as a manager, but it gives insider perspectives. Why do I encounter problems? Am I an ethnographic fly on the wall or active part of the problem? Storytelling leads to personal development.'*

4.4.4 Evaluating the action

To summarize, the action I took during this second cycle was storytelling and case writing, which was based on a careful review of my diaries, doctoral development plan and papers I submitted during DBA modules. I crafted three major storylines that introduce three key players and I investigated my relationship with these figures, my own behaviour towards them, patterns in my behaviour and the impact of my derailment potential on the organisation. By empathizing with the protagonists and getting inside their heads, I experimented with a method to look at myself and my actions through a different lens in order to evaluate my behaviour as well as understanding the responses of others. Case A was quickly and easily written, but then I moved on to Case C as it represents a climax with emotional

outbursts and a definitive outcome (resignation), and eventually decided upon writing Case B and another case with another protagonist. Later on, I placed the cases in chronological order.

When I started to write Case C, I immediately noticed a few things. Getting inside this protagonist's head and attempting to see the events from his perspective brought about many different emotions and realisations. Initially, I felt some relief from writing it down as a case study with a protagonist and a dilemma. I also noticed that it gave me a different view on my own behaviour, as I had to try and see things through his eyes and not mine. I had to reflect on how I communicated and behaved towards him and others, but also on the major issues and tensions colleagues were dealing with at the time. I immediately planned to use this case in class to discuss the tensions at different levels and to analyse what drove the key figures in the narrative, what the complexity of the situation was and what the protagonist or 'Manon' could have done differently to avoid resignation (i.e. was it justifiable the way she acted?). Writing the case provided with a first insight on derailment behaviour at the branch: they (we) all displayed dark traits and dysfunctional tendencies, and negatively influenced each other. In the classroom, or during coaching sessions, after reading the case one could apply the taxonomy of traits and characteristics that emerged from the literature review in chapter 2.

Hoping to repeat this experience, I moved on to writing Case B. Getting into this protagonist's head was important in order for me to understand why I had issues with line managers after him. Was I already on the path to derailment or were other factors influencing my behaviour? Case B did not lead to a similar epiphany as experienced during the creative phase of Case C. I concluded that, even though it had been tough as a new manager with little experience in managing a department and it was tough to be replaced, it was not a traumatic experience as compared to the last months at the business school. The boss from case B and I had many issues and traits in common. I realized that I had been bold, arrogant, was insensitive to a different culture, and relied too much on my previous strengths, which are all traits referring to derailment (see chapter 2 for lists of traits). I concluded that I understood this boss much better afterwards, but that the learning from the narrative and case writing was marginal. While I was designing Case D with another protagonist, I noticed that the learning had already happened during the development of Case C. Also, his story would not contribute much to the

already performed analysis (as he had left the organisation years before the narrative climax and had always been very supportive without any issues from my side).

I discontinued writing Case D to move on to the next step, after carefully summing up in my diary what I had learned:

1. *Events happen differently from what you might remember. Writing down the chronological order of events by extracting data from reports and journals was very helpful;*
2. *Going inside the minds of my previous bosses and looking at myself though their eyes helped uncover understanding of existing tensions and miscommunications;*
3. *It helps to give yourself a fictive name as well and depersonalize and detach yourself;*
4. *Reflecting on your own behaviour is challenging and can be emotional;*
5. *Going back to the experience helps to look at patterns in your own behaviour;*
6. *The organisation seemed to consist of several people with derailment traits.'*

To conclude this phase, I noticed that writing different narratives increased my ability to self-reflect and the next step would be to set into motion what I had learned, in order to practice self-leadership, self-regulation and self-improvement and to come up with a toolkit or a model that could help others.

4.4.5 Redefining context and purpose: model construction

During this phase, I was building towards the next cycle with the aim of constructing a model and a toolkit to be used in workshops for management education. An overall key learning from narrative writing was that it could be very useful when adopting a helicopter view, by taking a more distant perspective when writing down all the challenges, dilemmas, obstacles, events and managerial issues. I had written and edited business case studies for executive education in the past, and in my experience business case research could be very helpful in understanding organizational problems and formulating the lessons learned. The writing process put a magnifying glass on the actual problems, because the author of a case needs to describe why the issue at hand is so urgent for the protagonist of the case and why it is too complex to be solved right away. On a critical note I started to understand that this approach towards preventing derailment might work for me, as I love to write stories and have

developed proficient self-reflective practice throughout the years, but that this first-person action research method might not be suitable for everyone. I decided that my desired outcome should be a toolkit that could be applied by anyone after detecting derailment behaviour.

4.5 Cycle 3: the development of a model and a tool kit

Cycle 3 followed the same AR process as the previous cycles and was aimed at Research Question S3, to develop a toolkit in order to help other business professionals.

4.5.1 Constructing / meta-analysis

Until this cycle, I had been doing data generation and analysis from a first-person perspective. I had undergone some personality testing, I analysed and discussed my behaviour with a coach, and I had written down my narratives. I had learned that self-reflective practice and first-person action research 'from the inside out' might not be suitable for everyone. In my situation, when facing lack of leadership support and censorship, it was crucial to reason from an individual standpoint. Others facing derailment may not have to face these severe limitations and could be operating in more transparent organisations (and countries) where it is accepted to engage team members and superiors during the process of self-improvement and self-initiated behavioural change. The next logical step was to combine my personal conclusions and the findings from the literature review into a model and a toolkit that could be used in management education or consultancy. I informed myself by reading the case studies again as well as existing theories on remedies and preventive measures. Then, I started focusing on an all-compassing approach concerning effective remedies against derailment.

4.5.2 Planning and judging

I decided to draw all the strands together and develop a comprehensive model, which can be used in the toolkit and future workshops as a reference. The focus on the development of an actual workshop or masterclass provided with a connection between theory, personal reflections after the field work and the application of the research in my professional practice. So, moving on towards the desired state of becoming an individual (in my case: a lecturer or consultant) who is able to reflect upon her own behaviour and is able to inform or educate others by drawing upon her own experiences while being grounded in academic research, I first decided to match patterns in my behaviour to derailment themes and possible remedies

derived from the literature review, primarily based on the works of Bentz (1985), McCall & Lombardo (1983), Van Velsor & Leslie (1995), Hogan et al (2010), Carson et al (2012) and Kaiser et al (2015).

The next table (figure 29) illustrates this investigation.

Pattern derived from literature review	Derailment related themes derived from lit review	Possible remedies derived from literature review and first person AR
An over-reliance on single strength and core talent (energy, intelligence, specialised knowledge, being good with subordinates and colleagues)	Overdependence Narrow business experience	Planning exposure and development, working together with boss
Some trouble adapting to those with a different leadership style – getting irritated easily	Inability to develop or adapt (to a boss, culture, strategic differences)	Develop flexibility and adaptability, awareness of different leadership style and working methods Clear top down communication on expectations in terms of leadership style, decision-making, objectives
Lacks attention to detail	Failure to meet business objectives, performance problems	Develop self-reflection, self-awareness, paying attention to flaws Planning exposure and experience
Abrasiveness and assertiveness	Inability to adapt	Self-regulation, reflecting on impact of how I communicate
A strong focus on promotion and being perceived as ambitious (i.e. threat to boss).	Insensitive to others, isolates themselves	Planning promotion, appraisals and evaluations, transparent decision-making Regular feedback loops Working on keeping good relationship, managing upwards

Figure 29: investigation into patterns

The next step included judging the systems and processes in place or absent within my organisational context by asking relevant questions and adding possible solutions

(treatments) and a suggested sphere of influence (based on Furnham, 2010), as demonstrated in figure 30. These spheres of influence would later resonate with the entry level of the multi-level approach.

Number	Question	Answer (diagnosis)	Solution (treatment)	Sphere of influence
1	**Were checks and balances (appraisal cycles, feedback loops) in place or advised by HR to recognize dark traits before it manifests as derailment?**	No. Appraisal cycles existed of reached objectives and KPIs but did not include 360s for example. An HR department did not exist.	Implement regular review concerning behaviour and dysfunctional tendencies. During selection and recruitment, filter out the suspicious candidates.	Organisation
2	**Did senior managers give positive examples of leadership behaviour?**	No. I observed shouting, withdrawing in rooms, inflexibility, unresponsiveness to issues, unethical behaviour, biased thinking and an inability to engage or empower others.	Discussing expectations, communicating about role models, actively manage an organisational culture	Team
3	**Were individual competencies stimulated/developed**	No. There was a lack of professional development or competency building and employees complained about the immobility within the branch.	Exposure to different projects and domains, feedback on competencies, professional development training.	Team
4	**Was there a distribution of power and decision-making?**	No. There was a strict chain of command, which was top down, transactional and directive.	Avoid autonomous decision-making and top down communication of strategies, ensure	Organisation

			collective decision-making.	
5	**Were employees encouraged to work on personal identity and self-awareness**	Yes and No. It was accepted for senior and middle managers to be coached in order to improve their ability in decision-making. These efforts were not initiated by line managers.	Promote (executive) coaching to guide leaders.	Individual

Figure 30: Questions related to Furnham (2010)'s checks and balances

In order to establish this analysis, I looked at diary entries and professional notes. It was difficult to critically reflect on my own behaviour in relation to the impact of dysfunctional leadership behaviour some of my diary entries were very clear. For example, I used an entry at the back of my notebook from spring 2012 about a team meeting:

'there is little support and guidance, we miss structure, we need to be protected, we need a coaching not controlling management style, there is too much panic and no consistency'

And another note from 2015:

'why is management reluctant to work on people issues? How are disputes handled in absence of HR? I notice organizational silence. There is a continuous resistance to change countered by an authorative style: take it or leave it. Could it be an institutional problem? How do I communicate? What is my role as an active intervener?'

The conclusion was that, even though I had already gained a better understanding and insight into my own behaviour from self-assessment, coaching and case writing and analysis, it was very useful to connect the dots between scholarly works of Furnham, Lombardo and Hogan and my personal and organizational contexts, and my diaries.

4.5.3 Reflecting

Now that I had been able to assess and interpret derailment in my organisational context from a meta-analytic standpoint, it had become valuable to design the multi-level model that was starting to develop. Interdisciplinary treatments are very common nowadays in the medical

profession when dealing with complex diseases (for example, to deal with endometriosis, patients are introduced to a team of specialists, including gynaecologists, surgeons, urologists, psychologists, physiotherapists and dieticians; Ugwumadu et al, 2017). Other researchers concluded that interdisciplinary actions and approaches with multiple perspectives can promote innovative solutions to problems in society, by integrating different areas of knowledge (Camargo et al, 2017). After having tried different treatments to recover from my own assumed derailment, I discovered that each remedy could not have worked in isolation. Personal development, in my view, should therefore be based on an array of learning, problem solving and discovery activities, across different areas of knowledge and experience, altogether leading to effective results. From the literature review one could also draw that derailment is such a complex personal and organisational problem that the suggested measures may only work in cohesion and comprehension of the other. Various researchers such as Carson et al (2012) and Furnham (2010) have suggested the interdependence on different levels. For example, a mere focus on HR systems and measures such as regular performance reviews, training and appraisals, ignores the exemplary and open company culture that needs to exist with regards to leadership (Lombardo & Eichinger, 1989); or the self-awareness and self-leadership that is required to detect certain dysfunctional behaviour and derailment tendencies in oneself and be able to act upon it (Furnham, 2010). Persistently, I observed and noted that a multi-level and interdisciplinary approach would have been a better remedy in my professional context, provided that the organisational culture would have been more open and transparent, and leadership would have been willing to act upon derailment potential. So, I wanted to avoid looking at leadership derailment solely from either the leader or the employee's perspective, as Furnham (2010) convincingly criticises on page 256 in Chapter 10 (on derailment prevention) of his book 'The Elephant in the Board Room'.

4.5.4 Acting

After reviewing all findings and conclusions, I developed a diagnostic and treatment model on three levels, namely the individual, the collective and the organisation. As it was my objective to research the problem from an insider perspective following a bottom-up approach with an inclusive collaborative emphasis, I initially decided to call this concept the 'ME-WE-US Model'.

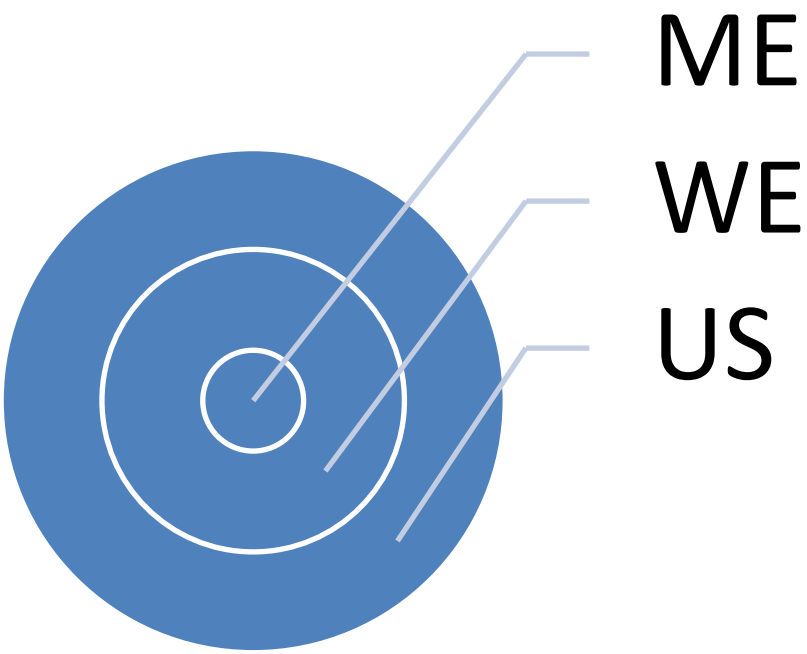


Figure 31: ME-WE-US model (Zwaanstra, 2017)

'ME' refers to critical reflection and self-awareness in terms of 'dark traits', positive and negative indicators, and triggers for destructive and dysfunctional behavioural tendencies (Chappelow & Leslie, 2000; Hogan & Hogan, 2001). 'ME' refers to introspection and the focus on the individual, but also to self-regulation, self-observation and self-initiation of tackling negative behavioural patterns by reflective, autoethnographic practice (Marshall, 1999). I explored this level by self-assessment, self-reflection and narrative writing. Autoethnography and case study as research methods clearly fitted well in this domain, as I experienced. Related introspective questions are: 1) how do I think/act and 2) what can I do to solve this issue?

'WE' then refers to *engagement and inclusion of others*, of rescuing potentially derailing, or already derailed managers supported or coached by line managers, team members and/or colleagues (Lombardo & Eichinger, 1989). 'WE' also refers to the collaboration itself between an individual and their line manager, coach or mentor (Nelson & Hogan, 2009; Witherspoon, 2014). I explored this level by engaging a coach, but this could also be an HR representative or other person of trust. It could also be a line manager or colleague, depending on the type of organisation. Related questions in the 'WE' domain are: 1) how can we help each other? 2) How can I make use of the

assistance from colleagues, or a coach, in order to change (my/our) behavioural patterns?

'US' refers to preventive measures from a wider *organisational* perspective, such as corporate governance checks and balances, effective selection procedures, and well communicated development planning of senior staff members and ensuring proper incubation periods for managers after promotion. Furnham (2010) mentions a few steps in great detail throughout the book, such as proper onboarding, performance monitoring and continued development planning after reaching a senior position. 'US' also refers to aiming at the creation of an inclusive, transparent and open company culture (Raelin, 2003) that allows all employees to have regular feedback on their performance (Carson et al, 2012). The related questions in this domain should be: 1) which organisational measures, policies, procedures, or systems can be implemented to ensure that dysfunctional tendencies are contained, and derailment avoided? 2) how can we prevent derailment by ensuring that we select the right candidates for the positions in our organisation based on both merits as well as character (i.e. possible dark traits or triggers)?

Later on, I renamed this model to the US-WE-ME model (see figure 32), as I wanted to emphasize the collective and inclusive exercise, in order to ensure critical thinking and avoiding bias throughout the derailment prevention process. Also, in general derailment prevention and deploying remedies are more often initiated by superiors than by individuals themselves, as it is easier to recognize derailment in others (Gentry et al, 2007) and self-initiated change and self-reflective practice is hard, as I experienced. Furthermore, as Furnham (2010) contends, having appropriate corporate systems and collective processes in place to avoid derailment means that the organisation as a whole should be involved in prevention or treatment. Nevertheless, becoming aware of one's own traps, triggers and dark traits is an important step towards preventing derailment from an individual perspective.

The US-WE-ME model is pictured as three spheres of influence with the individual (ego) at its core and the organisation at the outer layer (exo). The model is a continuous circle on purpose and should not be used or viewed in a linear fashion, as the measures can and should co-exist

within different settings and situations, while it should not matter which type of measure is applied first. The shape resonates inclusivity, as derailment prevention is best solved by collaborative efforts, even though the initiative and perspective could very well spring from the individual's mind. The following diagram (figure 32) depicts the US-WE-ME approach:

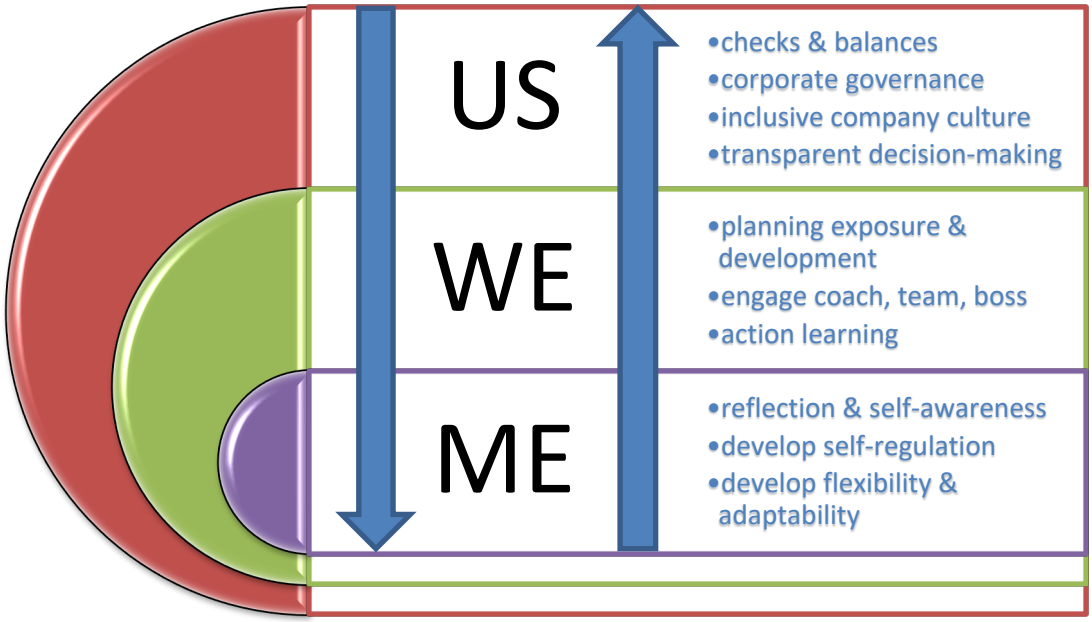


Figure 32: US WE ME model

From the US-WE-ME model I developed a presentation to become part of a workshop or masterclass and aimed to record a short video about self-initiated behavioural change, to be used in workshops. The current outline is as follows (see also appendix 3):

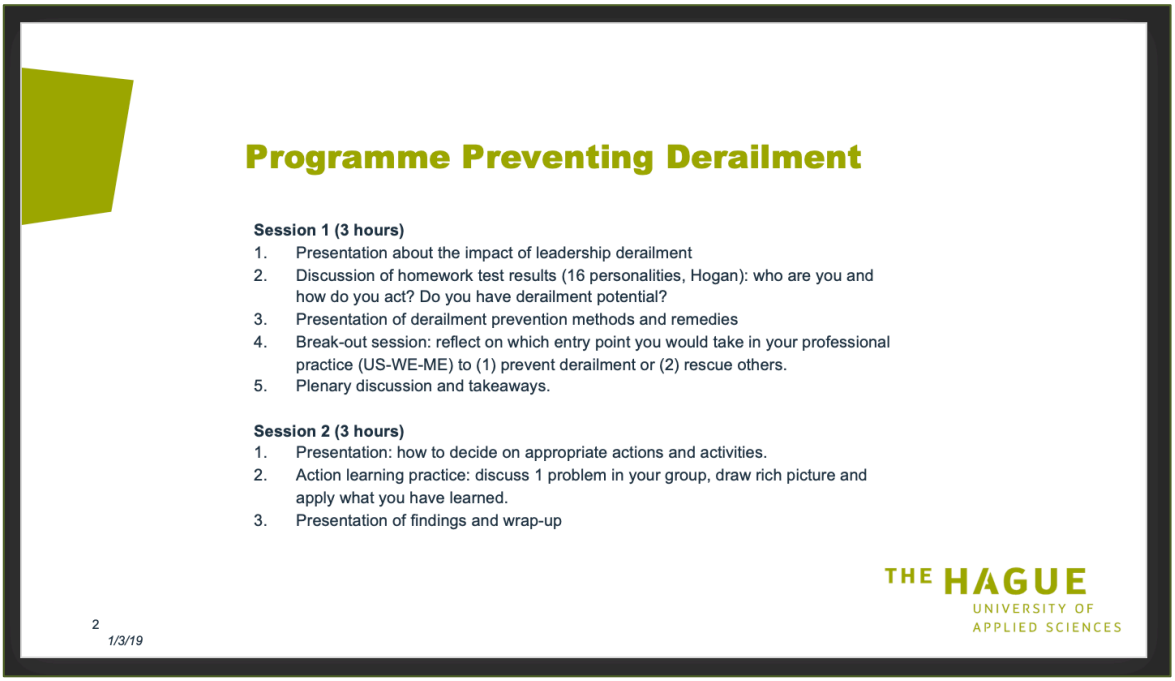


Figure 33: Snapshot from slide pack giving an overview of the workshop sessions

4.5.5 Evaluating cycle three

Hypothetically, integrally applying the US-WE-ME model should have a positive effect on preventing and treating derailment, as the individual components on all levels have been tested and studied. I realize that it is not a completely new and ground-breaking model, but to me it is effective with regards to its purpose: to inform and educate others. The model illustrates clearly the relationship between the activities needed to prevent or solve derailment. Looking critically at the toolkit and the workshop, it is important to stress that derailment should not be seen as a simple problem having a straightforward solution. The complexity of the problem and hence its multi-layered approach should never be simplified into a one-size-fits-all solution. My model can however be easily remembered, which will become useful for professionals struggling with derailment individually or collectively.

4.6 Ending the action research cycles: time for reflection

As Coghlan & Brannick (2010) suggest, the decision to end the action research cycles remains 'arbitrary' and it depended largely on my subjective judgement as to the extent that the whole dissertation project generated 'sufficient learning (p.77). After the second and third cycles, I had asked myself whether I got the outcome that I wanted, what I had learned and whether or not I had been mistaken or right about the situation (idem, p.79). Upon reviewing their questions for reflection on page 78, I concluded for each cycle the following:

Cycle 1. Through personality testing I had learned much more about my (work) personality, how it changed over the years and how it related to my professional practice. This related closely to what I had read about authentic leadership, self-leadership and role modelling with regards to understanding what my authentic behaviour would be. The assessment with regards to derailment and whether I was part of the problem, would have been more academically interesting if I could have been able to include the personality types of my superiors and colleagues, to assess whether differences) in personalities or even opposing types had had an impact on derailment behaviour in the branch. So, assessment of personality was helpful but did not result in being able to decide whether I was part of the problem.

Cycle 1. Coaching had a positive impact on self-regulation and understanding triggers and patterns in my behaviour. The coach guided me through a very difficult time and we practised different scenarios. I can imagine that coaching would have a better effect if the coach could work with the derailing individual with more insight in the professional situation and organisational context. In my case, it helped becoming more confident, but I have not experienced coaching as a remedy. In line with Lombardo & Eichinger (1989)'s ideas about rescuing derailers, I would suggest making a coach part of the organisational process if it is initiated by a line manager or colleague. One could consider other types of coaches, such as a team coach or an organisational coach, which requires different skills in terms of supervision (Thornton, 2010).

Cycle 2. Creating the narratives for case studies had a positive impact on developing a better sense of what had actually happened in my organisation and how leadership at the branch (including me) were behaving over a longer period of time in terms of derailment. The effect of using different lenses assisted in reflecting upon certain important events at work between 2011 and 2016. Initially, at the start of the dissertation process, I was opinionated and misled towards thinking about leadership derailment. Also, I suffered from the same assumptions that are natural and common to people (i.e. assuming that others derail, not me). Realizing and understanding that everyone has their own reasons for behaving in a certain way, due to work pressures or personal circumstances, helped forming a better picture of the

organisational context and created more empathy and sympathy towards my seniors. Together, we created our reality out of constructs and were stuck in a vicious circle of dark traits, organisational silence, silo behaviour, biased thinking and lack of transformational leadership in terms of appreciation, engagement and motivation of employees. The narratives were successful in deciding whether I was part of the problem and whether there was a possible correlation between individual behaviours and the answer should be positive.

Cycle 3. The development of a tool kit, containing a helpful illustrative model, workshop, presentation and a short video also had positive effects on my understanding of derailment as a phenomenon and preventive actions or remedies against it. I realized that taking only a first-person perspective to derailment is too limiting and I understood that preventive actions and treatments should be an inclusive process, resulting into the carefully chose taxonomy of *us, we and me,* instead of *organisation, team and individual*. The last cycle made the contribution to knowledge and practice of myself as a scholar-practitioner more concrete and meaningful.

CHAPTER 5: Conclusion

5.1 Summary

In chapter 1 I formulated the research questions that I attempted to answer by action research and autoethnographic data collection and analysis. My objective was to provide answers to the following research questions:

R1 Can someone recognize their own derailment, and how?

S1: Which type of analysis is most suitable for self-inquiry and reflection in order to prevent or avoid derailment in my organisational context?

S2: Which boundaries/limitations exist in detecting and treating one's own derailment behaviour?

S3: How can academic findings combined with my own experience of undergoing selected 'treatments' be translated into a useful toolkit (checklists and activities) for other business professionals?

R2 Which factors impacted derailment potential and possible solutions in my organisational context?

The questions were based on problems existing in my organisational context in a set timeframe that influenced my (leadership) behaviour. My focus was always to eventually be able to help managers to identity derailment behaviour and explore effective methods to solve derailment (related) issues. I produced a comparative study and mapped links between traits, triggers, traps, as formulated by scholars, and then became involved in a self-inquiry driven intervention aiming at understanding the challenges professionals might experience when attempting to solve the personal and organisational issue of derailment. Because my professional practice is in higher education, I aimed at leveraging my findings by developing a toolkit and workshop in order to inform and educate others.

I applied three different methodologies: autoethnography, case study and narrative research, within the framework of action research. These methodologies were applied in three cycles: autoethnographic cycle (describing my quest towards understanding my own personality, dark traits and my derailment potential), case study cycle (writing cases and analysing the

creative process as well as the narratives), and a more meta-analytical cycle during which I drew all the strands together and developed a model to be used for educational purposes.

Each action research cycle followed the same process, as demonstrated in Figure 33.

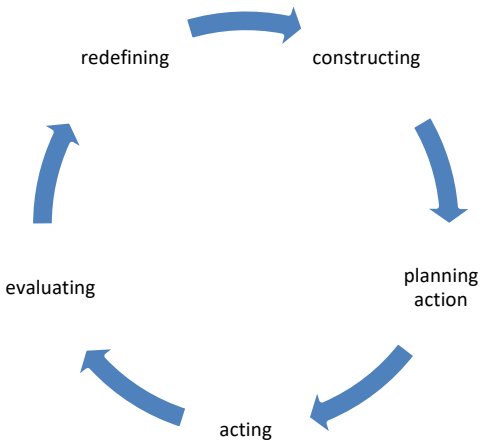


Figure 34: visualisation of an AR cycle

During cycle 1 I had attempted to answer Research Question 1 by undergoing treatments and remedies that I had derived from the literature review, with leading and helpful publications being Lombardo & Eichinger (1989), Van Velsor & Leslie (1995), Nelson & Hogan (2009), Furnham (2010) and Carson et al (2012). I chose personality testing to gain insight into my personality and possible dark traits. Secondary, I decided to immerse myself into executive coaching to find out whether this would be satisfactory towards detecting and preventing derailment. Thirdly, I ensured to continuously meta-analyse what I was doing, in order to keep track of the creation of knowledge and my doctoral development. In cycle 2 I started writing narratives, taking the form of case studies to attempt taking a detached perspective upon my own behaviour through the lens of my previous superiors. In cycle 3 I consolidated the literature review and my personal experiences into a model in order to visualize the available remedies and other suggestions derived from research. I concluded that a multi-level approach could be a good solution. After the third cycle, I felt that I was able to answer the research questions.

5.2 Answering the research questions

With regards to the question (R1) whether someone can recognize their own derailment, and how, I would posit that recognizing any negative behavioural traits of oneself requires an ability to self-reflect in an honest, unbiased manner, as I learned from experience. It also requires access to information about derailment behaviour and the complexity of it. This information can be self-initiated or taught. It can be done by management education or employing a coach. There are self-assessments and checklists available to test one's inclination towards derailment, based on evaluation of personality traits and characteristics in line with typical derailment behaviour. On a critical note, it must be noted that it is not easy to admit to being a derailer, as humans tend to ignore their own flaws (Gentry et al, 2007). This means that observing derailment from a first-person perspective is by definition subjective.

With reference to the first sub-question (S1) I would conclude that a multi-level treatment process is necessary in order to solve the issue. Personality testing, executive coaching and writing up narratives are not quite sufficient as types of individual analysis with the aim of solving or preventing derailment. Education and involving coaches in the organisational change seem to be more effective. The limitations in detecting and treating derailment behaviour (S2) are therefore biased thinking, escalation of commitment (trap), and lack of self-leadership in terms of reflection and regulation. By combining all the cycles in one model and workshop, other professionals can be informed on consequences and remedies (S3). The tool kit exists of a workshop with checklists, case studies, questions, and advised activities.

In reference to factors that impacted derailment potential and which solutions could have been deployed in my organisational context (R2), I would posit that the development of narratives and imagining the thought process of leadership in my organisation had proven to be useful first-person action research tools in gaining a meta-analytic view and practice double-loop learning. Furthermore, it became clear, as reflected upon in cycle 1 and as extracted from Critical Action Learning reports from the DBA programme, that the absence of an HR department, or representative, within the branch was also of influence on potential derailment behaviour. Typical HR practices such as recruitment, selection, performance management, appraisal cycles, corporate checks and balances, were part of the

responsibilities of senior management, leading to too much autonomy in decision making by this organisational layer with regards to employee well-being, and also becoming a threat to a transparent chain of command (Furnham, 2010). As the author stated: 'discretion is freedom, freedom is power and power can corrupt' (p.239). Another influencing factor was the traditional management style and hierarchy within the organisation, which meant that feedback on leadership behaviour and constructive activities towards improvement of (negative) behaviour were not accepted. The stressful expat environment and pressure of not failing played a role as well, because losing your job and sponsorship meant, in most cases, leaving the country. Senior management decided therefore not to invest in employee professional development and continuity planning, as most expats were living in Qatar only for a limited amount of time (which, was not valid, as many expats like me lived abroad for more than 5 years). Planned professional development and exposure are two factors that may rescue derailing managers, according to Lombardo & Eichinger (1989) but unfortunately, I had not witnessed this during my career at the branch. Lastly, organisational silence contributed to a lack of feedback upwards and downwards, creating tendencies between lower levels and senior leadership with managers on different levels not becoming aware of the impact of their behaviour. As Furnham (2010) suggests throughout his book, corporate checks and balances in terms of governance and decision making as well as feedback loops are essential elements in preventing derailment, whereas Hogan & Kaiser (2009) contend that self-reflection and personality assessment are needed to understand one's own tendencies and dark traits. If such a culture does not exist, as in my professional context, improving oneself through reflective practice and coaching (in other words: by engaging yourself and others) are the only treatments possible, I concluded.

5.3 Actionable Results

The last and 3rd cycle completed the action research, in order to focus on the desired goal: actionable results, i.e. the development of a tool kit based on a model that could be used for educational purposes. During the last AR cycle, I decided to classify findings into three domains: the organisation, the collective (or team) and the individual. But after careful reflection, I felt that again I was keeping too much of a distance. So, I changed the terminology into inclusive forms and started thinking in 'Us, We, and Me', instead of 'them' or the organisation, collective and individual. This resulted in the US-WE-ME model (Figure 30), a

straightforward way of depicting collaboration and interaction in terms of preventing or treating derailment. Based on academic research and my own findings after experiencing treatments on my own, derailment can only be tackled by looking at the issue from multiple perspectives and by applying a complex array of collaborations, interactions, reflections and organisational measures.

The conclusion and actionable result of action research is a useful model based on a multi-level and multiple entry approach that can be applied easily when discussing preventive measures and treatments against derailment in an educational setting. It is not a complicated model and is formulated in such a way that it motivates everyone to work together and see the issue from a personal perspective (i.e. the organisation is US, WE are the group, and I (ME) am responsible for my own actions and reflections). During workshops it will be complemented by the case studies to collectively assess who was derailing and what the organisation could have done to prevent or treat this. Telling the story of their own organisation or derailed individual will contribute to improved reflective practice.

To conclude, the investigation into my own derailment potential, the experimentation with several remedies and the development of the US-WE-ME model has produced clear actionable results and important insights, fitting with the targeted objective of applied research within a Doctor of Business Administration programme.

5.4 Policy implications and recommendations

In order to make the application of my research more specific, it is important to suggest potential use of the findings to others. First of all, I believe that action research is a solid methodology or strategy (Dick & Greenwood, 2015) to solve organisational problems and working on change at the same time, while first-person action research is a useful approach to understand challenges such as behavioural change or self-experimentation with new models. As I discovered, treating or tackling the sensitive issue of negative (destructive and dysfunctional) leadership behaviour can be performed from a systematic basis such as AR cycles. It may help taking a distant approach as an insider and researcher and could avoid going into unstructured directions. Secondly, the suggested treatments that I have chosen are well accessible to all professionals. Many managers have access to coaches nowadays and personality testing is free online. Of course, when digging deeper and when needing

psychiatric advice due to a grave personality disorder getting help from a specialist is always recommendable. Storytelling and case study analysis are widely used methods in business education, but my approach is specifically targeted as to telling the story through the lens of the other (boss, colleague) to reflect on one's own actions. This could serve as an exercise in class or during coaching sessions to stimulate creative and critical thinking. What is most important here, is the account of my self-experimentation and profound understanding of the complexity of behavioural change. Thirdly, the Us-We-Me model as a discussion tool assists in understanding the complexity of the problem and as it is designed to be non-linear, one could choose the entry that feels most fitting and comfortable. I had no choice but to start with 'Me' and with self-initiated change and introspection, but others might want to start with the organisation or team development and collective efforts. And finally, the toolkit itself exists of a handbook, the cases and a workshop (digitally recorded) or masterclass developed around the theme. Appendix 3 gives a good example of the workshop. To sum up, the research findings can be implemented into both business education as well as during consultancy or coaching.

5.5 Final reflections and further research

Upon completing the action research cycles for this doctoral thesis and completing the write-up, my research interests continued to be sparked. Within my current organisation (a university of applied sciences in the Netherlands), I have joined a lectorate and some research groups that focus on change management and innovative models. This is where the US-WE-ME model can be further tested and peer reviewed. I also expect that there will be an opportunity to start an action learning set with the senior management team of our faculty after the workshop during which I introduce my findings and the toolkit based on the US-WE-ME model. Many colleagues and students have shown interest in my research findings. As the university is heavily investing in blended learning at the moment, my workshop could also be recorded as a 'green screen' talking head type of presentation and made available during leadership courses of the master programmes for additional learning. The only obstacle at this point is that our senior leadership is highly interested in self-improvement (and is encouraged to take part in internal leadership training), but when I mentioned organising a derailment prevention workshop the topic sounded a bit negative and unattractive, according to colleagues. Pointing out the percentages of derailing senior managers and the costs of

derailed individuals for the organisation caught the attention. However, in general, fellow senior managers seem to be more interested in ways to become more successful instead of reflecting on dark traits in their personalities. Perhaps this is part of what Furnham (2010) observes as being the hostile world full of threats as perceived by leaders (p.7). This was a lesson in terms of branding and selling the toolkit and workshop internally as a means to improve behaviour and thus the organisation's effectiveness and performance.

The next step is to translate the model and the tool kit into Dutch and write a Dutch handbook - as most leading publications have been in English and derailment course is also an issue in the Netherlands. I also aim to write an article on the different connotations between English derailment and the Dutch *Ontsporing*, as well as the English meaning of leadership and the Dutch connotation of *Leiderschap*. It has been discussed in a similar fashion as their Anglophonic counterparts by Dutch and Flemish researchers (Van Luijk, 2014; Koolma, 2014;). Still, there is no abundancy in academic literature on the topic of derailment and treatments in the Dutch language, which shows a gap and an opportunity. Other research projects that I am interested in but could not include in this thesis relate to escalation of commitment when leaders derail, communication patterns in derailing leaders and studying the impact of derailment in higher education (for example at my university). As I aim to continuously contribute to academic knowledge these topics would form the basis for future case studies and academic publications.

REFERENCES

- Aasland, M.S., Skogstad, A., Notelaers, G., Nielsen, M.B. & Einarsen, S. (2010) 'The Prevalence of Destructive Leadership Behaviour', *British Journal of Management*, vol. 21, no. 2, pp. 438–452.
- Argyris, C. & Schon, D. (1974) Theory in Practice: Improving Professional Effectiveness. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Austin, J. F., & Murray, J. M. (1993). 'Personality characteristics and profiles of employed and outplaced executives using the 16PF'. *Journal of Business and Psychology,* 8, 57–6.
- Badaracco, J.L. (1992) 'Business ethics: Four spheres of executive responsibility', *California Management Review*, 34(3), 64-79.
- Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). *Transformational leadership.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Bass, Bernard (1985). *Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations*. New York, NY: The Free Press. pp. 14,121–124.
- Bentz, V.J. (1967) The Sears experience in the investigation, description, and prediction of executive behavior. Measuring Executive Effectiveness, 147-206.
- Bentz, V. J. (1985) Research findings from personality assessment of executives. *Personality assessment in organizations*, 82-144.
- Bentz, V. J. (1990). Contextual issues in predicting high-level leadership performance: Contextual richness as a criterion consideration in personality research with executives. In K. E. Clark & M. B. Clark (Eds.), *Measures of leadership* (p. 131–143). Leadership Library of America.
- Boden, R., Greenwood, D., Hall, B., Levin, M., Marshall, J., and Wright, S. (2015). Action research in universities and higher education worldwide. In: The SAGE Handbook of Action Research. Sage, London, pp. 281-290.
- Bono, J, Braddy, P, Liu, Y, Gilbert, E, Fleenor, J, Quast, L, & Center, B (2016), 'Dropped on the way to the top: Gender and managerial derailment', *Personnel Psychology*.
- Brinkmann, S. (2012) *Qualitative Inquiry in Everyday Life: Working with Everyday Life Materials*. London: Sage. 197 pp.
- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Caillier, J, & Sa, Y (2017), 'Do transformational-oriented leadership and transactional-oriented leadership have an impact on whistle-blowing attitudes? A longitudinal examination conducted in US federal agencies', *Public Management Review*, 19, 4, pp. 406-422.

- Camargo, J. T. F. de *et al.* (2017) 'Information Technology and Public Health: Possibilities for Innovation through Interdisciplinary Actions', *Procedia Computer Science, 104*, pp. 294–301.
- Cannatelli, B, Smith, B, Giudici, A, Jones, J & Conger, M (2017), 'An Expanded Model of Distributed Leadership in Organizational Knowledge Creation', *Long Range Planning*, vol. 50, no. 5, pp. 582–602,
- Capretta, C., Clark, L. P. & Dai, G. (2008) 'Executive derailment: Three cases in point and how to prevent it', *Global Business & Organizational Excellence*, 27(3), pp. 48–56.
- Carlyle, T. (1841). Heroes, hero worship, and the heroic in history. Philadelphia, PA: Henry Altemus.
- Carson, M, Shanock, L, Heggestad, E, Andrew, A, Pugh, S, & Walter, M (2012), 'The Relationship Between Dysfunctional Interpersonal Tendencies, Derailment Potential Behavior, and Turnover', *Journal Of Business & Psychology*, 27, 3, pp. 291-304.
- Cerasoli, C, Nicklin, J, & Ford, M (2014), 'Intrinsic Motivation and Extrinsic Incentives Jointly Predict Performance: A 40-Year Meta-Analysis', *Psychological Bulletin*, 140, 4, pp. 980-1008.
- Chappelow, C, & Leslie, J (2000), 'The Bad News: Derailment Happens', Keeping Your Career On Track: Twenty Success Strategies, p. 7.
- Chiu-Kuei Chang, C, Kuo-Jen, Y, & Lung-Chi, L (2013), 'A REFLECTIVE SELF-INQUIRY INTO MY TEACHING PRACTICES WITH NON-ENGLISH-MAJOR TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS', *Canadian Journal Of Action Research*, 14, 3, pp. 59-71
- Chong, D. (2013) 'The relevance of management to society; Peter Drucker's oeuvre from the 1940s and 1950s', *Journal of Management History*, 19(1), pp. 55–7.
- Cilliers & Greyvenstein (2012), 'The impact of silo mentality on team identity: An organisational case study', SAJIP: *South African Journal Of Industrial Psychology*, 38, 2, pp. 1-9.
- Clark, T. & Salaman, G. (1998) 'Telling Tales: Management Gurus' Narratives and the Construction of Managerial Identity', *JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES -OXFORD,* p. 137.
- Coghlan, D. & Brydon-Miller, M. (Eds.) (2014). The SAGE Encyclopedia of Action Research. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.
- Coghlan, D. & Brannick, T. (2010) *Doing action research in your own organization*. 3rd ed. London: Sage.
- Coghlan, D. & Brannick, T. (2019) *Doing action research in your own organization*. 5th ed. London: Sage.
- Cohen, S. B. (2013) 'Zero Degrees of Empathy: A New Theory of Human Cruelty and Kindness', *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry*, 10(3), pp. 411–413.
- Comstock, NW (2016), 'Critical Skills: Leadership', *Salem Press Encyclopedia*, Research Starters.

- Conger, J., Kanungo, R and Menon, S. (2000) 'Charismatic Leadership and Follower Effects', *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 21(7), p. 747.
- Creswell, J. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design*. *Choosing Among Five Approaches*. 3rd ed. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. & Poth, C. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry and research design*. *Choosing Among Five Approaches*. 4th ed. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Cuddy, A. J. C., Kohut, M., & Neffinger, J. (2013). Connect, then lead. *Harvard Business Review, 91*(7–8), 54–61, 132.
- Dick, B. & Greenwood, D. J. (2015) 'Theory and method: Why action research does not separate them', *ACTION RESEARCH*, 13(2), pp. 194–197.
- Ellis, C, Adams, T & Bochner, A. (2010), 'AUTOETHNOGRAPHY: AN OVERVIEW', *Astrolabio: Nueva Época*, Vol 0, Iss 14, Pp 249-273 (2015), 14, p. 249
- Ely, R. & Thomas, J. (2001) 'Cultural Diversity at Work: The Effects of Diversity Perspectives on Work Group Processes and Outcomes', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 46(2), p. 229.
- Finkelstein, S. (2003) Why Smart Executives Fail and What You Can Learn From Their Mistakes. New York: Portfolio Penguin Group.
- Flood, R. & Romm, N. (2018) 'A systemic approach to processes of power in learning organizations: Part I – literature, theory, and methodology of triple loop learning', *Learning Organization*, 25(4), pp. 260–272.
- Furnham, A (2010). The Elephant In The Boardroom. [Electronic Book]: The Causes Of Leadership Derailment. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Furnham, A, Trickey, G, & Hyde, G (2012). 'Bright aspects to dark side traits: Dark side traits associated with work success', *Personality And Individual Differences*, 52, 8, p. 908-913.
- Furnham, A. & Crump, J. (2005) 'Personality Traits, Types, and Disorders: An Examination of the Relationship Between Three Self-Report Measures', *EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF PERSONALITY*, p. 167.
- Gardner, W. L., Cogliser, C. C., Davis, K. M., & Dickens, M. P. (2011). Authentic leadership: A review of the literature and research agenda. *The Leadership Quarterl*y, 22(6), 1145.
- Gemmill, G. & Oakley, J. (1992) 'Leadership: an alienating social myth?', *Human Relations*, (2), p. 113.
- Gemmill, G., & Oakley, J. (1992). Leadership: An Alienating Social Myth? *Human Relations*, *45*(2), 113–129.

- Gentry, W, Clark, M, Young, S, Cullen, K, & Zimmerman, L (2015), 'How displaying empathic concern may differentially predict career derailment potential for women and men leaders in Australia', *The Leadership Quarterly*, 26, Special Issue: Leadership and Emotions, pp. 641-653.
- Gentry, W, Hannum, K, & Yip, J (2010), 'Self-Observer Rating Discrepancies of Managers in Asia: A study of derailment characteristics and behaviors in Southern and Confucian Asia', *International Journal Of Selection And Assessment*, 18, 3, p. 237-250.
- Gentry, W, Hannum, K, Ekelund, B, & de Jong, A (2007), 'A study of the discrepancy between self- and observer-ratings on managerial derailment characteristics of European managers', *European Journal Of Work And Organizational Psychology*, 16, 3, p. 295-325
- Gentry, W, Mondore, S, & Cox, B (2007), 'A study of managerial derailment characteristics and personality preferences', *Journal Of Management Development*, 26, 9, p. 857-873
- Gentry, W.A., Katz, R.B. & McFeeters, B. (2009) The continual need for improvement to avoid derailment: a study of college and university administrators, Higher Education Research & Development, 28:3, pp. 335-348.
- Goffee, R, & Jones, G (2006), 'Managing Authenticity: The Paradox of Great Leadership', *Harvard Business Review*, 84, 5, p. 151
- Göttfert, E (2015), 'EMBEDDING CASE STUDY RESEARCH INTO THE RESEARCH CONTEXT', *International Journal Of Sales, Retailing & Marketing*, 4, 9, pp. 23-32.
- Greenwood, DJ & Levin, M (2007), *Introduction to action research*, 2nd edn, SAGE Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks, California.
- Gregory, S, & Kleiner, B (1991), 'WOMEN IN BUSINESS: FAST TRACK DERAILMENT', *Equal Opportunities International*, 6, p. 1
- Heider, KG (1975), 'What Do People Do? Dani Auto-Ethnography', *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 1, p. 3
- Henkel, M. (2002). Emerging concepts of academic leadership and their implications for intra-institutional roles and relationships in higher education. *European Journal of Education*, 37(1), 29–41.
- Hersey, P., & Blanchard, K. H. (1977) *Management of organization behavior: Utilizing human resources.* 3rd ed. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, Inc.
- Hofstede, G. (2011). Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 2*(1).
- Hogan, J., Hogan, R., & Kaiser, R. B. (2010). *Management derailment*. In S. Zedeck (Ed.) American Psychological Association Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Vol. 3 (pp. 555-575). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

- Hogan, R. & Hogan, J. (2001) 'Assessing Leadership: A View from the Dark Side', *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SELECTION AND ASSESSMENT*, p. 40.
- Huczynski, A. (2006) *Management Gurus*. United Kingdom, Europe: Routledge.
- Ibarra, H (2015), 'The Authenticity Paradox. (cover story)', *Harvard Business Review*, 93, 1/2, pp. 52-59.
- Kaiser, R. B., LeBreton, J. M. & Hogan, J. (2015) 'The Dark Side of Personality and Extreme Leader Behavior', *APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY -LONDON- LAWRENCE ERLBAUM ASSOCIATES THEN PSYCHOLOGY PRESS-*, p. 55.
- Kaplan, R. E. & Kaiser, R. B. (2003) 'Rethinking a Classic Distinction in Leadership Implications for the Assessment and Development of Executives', *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice & Research*, 55(1), pp. 15–25
- KARABAĞ KÖSE, E, & GÜÇLÜ, N (2017), 'Examining the Relationship between Leadership Styles of School Principals, Organizational Silence and Organizational Learning', *International Online Journal Of Educational Sciences*, 9, 1, pp. 129-14.
- KARK, R, & VAN DIJK, D (2007), 'MOTIVATION TO LEAD, MOTIVATION TO FOLLOW: THE ROLE OF THE SELF-REGULATORY FOCUS IN LEADERSHIP PROCESSES', *Academy of Management Review*, 32, 2, pp. 500-528.
- Kauffman, C. & Hodgetts, W. H. (2016) 'Model agility: Coaching effectiveness and four perspectives on a case study', *Consulting Psychology Journal*, 68(2), pp. 157–176.
- Koolma, H.M., (2014). Leren van ontsporen.
- Kovach, K. A. (1987) 'What Motivates Employees? Workers and Supervisors Give Different Answers', *Business Horizons*, 30(5), p. 58.
- Kruse, S. and Prettyman, S. S. (2008) 'Women, leadership, and power revisiting the Wicked Witch of the West', *GENDER AND EDUCATION -ABINGDON-*, p. 451
- Kukla, A., (2013). Social constructivism and the philosophy of science. Routledge.
- Leary, T.G., Green, R., Denson, K., Schoenfeld, G., Henley, T. & Langford, H. (2013), 'The Relationship Among Dysfunctional Leadership Dispositions, Employee Engagement, Job Satisfaction, and Burnout', *Psychologist-Manager Journal (American Psychological Association)*, vol. 16, no. 2, p. 112.
- Lee, RA (2012), 'Accelerating the Development and Mitigating Derailment of High Potentials Through Mindfulness Training', TIP: *The Industrial-Organizational Psychologist*, 49, 3, pp. 23-33.
- Lewin, K., Llippit, R. and White, R.K. (1939). Patterns of aggressive behavior in experimentally created social climates. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 10, 271-301

- LI, M, MOBLEY, W, & KELLY, A (2013), 'When Do Global Leaders Learn Best to Develop Cultural Intelligence? An Investigation of the Moderating Role of Experiential Learning Style', *Academy Of Management Learning & Education*, 12, 1, pp. 32-50
- Lipman-Blumen, J. (1996). Connective leadership: Managing in a changing world. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Logan, A (2012) Improving personal voice in academic writing: an action inquiry using self-reflective practice, *Reflective Practice,* 13:6, 775-788
- Lombardo, M & McCauley, C.D (1988) 'The Dynamics of Management Derailment' (1988), *Issues & Observations*, 8, 3, p. 14.
- Lombardo, M, & Eichinger, R (1989), Preventing Derailment: What To Do Before It's Too Late? Greensboro, N.C. : Center for Creative Leadership, c1989.
- Lombardo, M, & Eichinger, R (1990), 'Rescuing Derailed Executives', *Readers' Choice: A Decade Of Issues & Observations,* pp. 135-142.
- Lombardo, M, & McCall Jr., M (1983), 'Management homilies: Do they hold up under close examination?', *Management Review*, 72, 7, p. 52.
- Lombardo, M. M., Ruderman, M. N. & McCauley, C. D. (1988) 'Explanations of Success and Derailment in Upper-Level Management Positions', *Journal of Business & Psychology*, 2(3), pp. 199–216.
- Luft, J. and Ingham, H., (1961). The Johari Window: a graphic model of awareness in interpersonal relations. *Human relations training news,* 5(9), pp.6-7.
- Luijk, F. van (2014). *De ontspoorde manager: waarom mensen aan de top de weg kwijtraken*. Business Contact.
- Lyubovnikova, J, Legood, A, Turner, N, & Mamakouka, A (2017), 'How Authentic Leadership Influences Team Performance: The Mediating Role of Team Reflexivity', *Journal Of Business Ethics*, 141, 1, pp. 59-70.
- Manen, M. van (2014). Phenomenology of Practice. New York: Routledge.
- Manz, C, Houghton, J, Neck, C, Fugate, M, & Pearce, C (2016), 'Whistle While You Work: Toward a Model of Emotional Self-Leadership', *Journal Of Leadership And Organizational Studies*, 23, 4, p. 374-38
- Manz, CC (1986), 'Self-Leadership: Toward an Expanded Theory of Self-Influence Processes in Organizations', *Academy Of Management Review*, 11, 3, pp. 585-600
- Marshall, J. (1999), 'Living life as inquiry', *Systemic Practice and Action Research*, 12 (2):155-71.

- Masuch, M. (1985) 'Vicious Circles in Organizations', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 30(1), pp. 14–33.
- McCall, M. W. & Hollenbeck, G. P. (2002) 'Global fatalities: when international executives derail', *Ivey Business Journal*, (5), p. 74.
- McDonald, E, & van Eeden, R (2014), 'The impact of home language on the understanding of the vocabulary used in the South African version of the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire Fifth Edition', *South African Journal Of Psychology*, 44, 2, pp. 228-242
- McGee-Cooper, A (2005), 'Tribalism: Culture Wars at Work', *Journal For Quality & Participation*, 28, 1, pp. 12-15;
- McHugh, K, Yammarino, F, Dionne, S, Serban, A, Sayama, H, & Chatterjee, S (2016), 'Collective decision making, leadership, and collective intelligence: Tests with agent-based simulations and a Field study', *The Leadership Quarterly*, 27, Special Issue: Collective and Network Approaches to Leadership, pp. 218-241
- Meindl, J., Ehrlich, S., and Dukerich, M. (1985) 'The Romance of Leadership', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 30(1), p. 78.
- Morrison, A.M., White, R.P. & Van Velsor, E. (1987) *Breaking the Glass Ceiling: Can Women Reach the Top of America's Largest Corporations?*, Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA.
- Morrison, E. & Milliken, F. (2000) 'Organizational Silence: A Barrier to Change and Development in a Pluralistic World', *The Academy of Management Review*, 25(4), p. 706.
- Neck, CP (2006), *Self-Leadership*, Bradford, England: Emerald Group Publishing.
- Nelson, E. & Hogan, R. (2009) 'Coaching on the Dark Side', *INTERNATIONAL COACHING PSYCHOLOGY REVIEW*, p. 9.
- Nohria, N & Lawrence, PR (2002) *Driven: How human Nature Shapes our Choices.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Pedler, MJ (2008), *Action Learning For Managers*. 2nd ed. Aldershot, England: Gower Publishing.
- Pinder, CC (1977), 'Concerning the Application of Human Motivation Theories in Organizational Settings', *Academy Of Management Review*, 2, 3, pp. 384-397
- Pink, D (2009) Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us. NY: Riverhead Books.
- Rasch, R., Shen, W., Davies, S. E., & Bono, J. (2008). The development of a taxonomy of ineffective leadership behaviors. In *23rd annual conference of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, San Francisco, CA*.
- Reed, MI (2009), 'The theory/practice gap: a problem for research in business schools?', *Journal Of Management Development*, 28, 8, pp. 685-693

- Rehman, S. & Nasir, N. (2016) 'The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People (Book Review)', *Peshawar Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences*, (2), p. 211.
- Riedler, M (2016), 'An Art Educator's Journey of Becoming a Researcher: A Self-Reflective Auto-Ethnography of Identity Construction and Personal Growth', *International Journal Of Progressive Education*, 12, 2, pp. 138-148.
- Rowlands, B.H., (2005). Grounded in practice: Using interpretive research to build theory. *The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methodology*, *3*(1), pp.81-92.
- Schrobsdorff, S (2016), 'Double Standards: Available In His and Hers', *Time*, 188, 14, p. 63.
- Schuh, S., Bark, A., Quaquebeke, N. van, Hossiep, R., Frieg, R & Van Dick, R. (2014), 'Gender Differences in Leadership Role Occupancy: The Mediating Role of Power Motivation', *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 120, no. 3, p. 363.
- Schwartz-Shea, P. and Yanow, D., (2013). *Interpretive research design: Concepts and processes*. Routledge.
- Seiling, J, & Hinrichs, G (2005), 'MINDFULNESS AND CONSTRUCTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY AS CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE SENSEMAKING: A New Imperative for Leaders as Sensemanagers', *Organization Development Journal*, 23, 3, pp. 82-8
- Shipper, F, & Dillard, J. (2000), 'A study of impending derailment and recovery of middle managers across career stages', *Human Resource Management*, 39, 4, pp. 331-345.
- Silverman, D (1998), 'Qualitative research: meanings or practices?', *Information Systems Journal,* 8, 1, pp. 3-20.
- Sleesman, D. J. (2019) 'Pushing through the tension while stuck in the mud: Paradox mindset and escalation of commitment', *Organizational Behavior & Human Decision Processes*, 155, pp. 83–96.
- Smith, B (2011), 'The Sense and Sensibility of Qualitative Research', *Qualitative Report,* 16, 4, p. 1141.
- Sotirakou, T. (2004). Coping with conflict within the entrepreneurial university: Threat or challenge for heads of departments in the UK higher education context. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 70(3), 345–37.
- Staw, B.M. (1981) 'The Escalation of Commitment to a Course of Action', *The Academy of Management Review*, 6(4), p. 577.
- Stein, R. and Swan, A. B. (2019) 'Evaluating the validity of Myers-Briggs Type Indicator theory: A teaching tool and window into intuitive psychology', *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, (2).

- Stone, F (2004), 'Deconstructing Silos and Supporting Collaboration', *Employment Relations Today (*Wiley), 31, 1, pp. 11-18.
- Strathe, M. I., & Wilson, V. W. (2006). Academic leadership: The pathway to and from.
- Temple, J, & Ylitalo, J (2009), 'Promoting Inclusive (and Dialogic) Leadership in Higher Education Institutions', *Tertiary Education & Management* (Routledge), 15, 3, pp. 277-289.
- Thomas, J. L., Dickson, M. W. & Bliese, P. D. (2001) 'Values predicting leader performance in the U.S. Army Reserve Officer Training Corps Assessment Center: evidence for a personality-mediated model', *LEADERSHIP QUARTERLY*, p. 181.
- Thompson, G, & Vecchio, R (2009), 'Situational leadership theory: A test of three versions', *The Leadership Quarterly*, 20, pp. 837-848.
- Thornton, C., (2010). *Group and team coaching: The essential guide*. Routledge.
- Tsoukas, H. & Chia, R. (2002) 'On organizational becoming: rethinking organizational change', *Organization Science*, 13 (5), pp.567–582
- Ugwumadu, L. et al. (2017) 'The role of the multidisciplinary team in the management of deep infiltrating endometriosis'. *Gynecological Surgery: Endoscopic Imaging and Allied Techniques,* 14(1), p. 1
- Van Velsor, E, & Leslie, J (1995), 'Why executives derail: perspectives across time and cultures', *Academy Of Management Executive*, 9, 4, pp. 62-72.
- Vora, N (2014), 'Between global citizenship and Qatarization: negotiating Qatar's new knowledge economy within American branch campuses', *Ethnic & Racial Studies*, 37, 12, pp. 2243-2260.
- Williams, J, Bhanugopan, R, & Fish, A (2011), 'Localization of human resources in the State of Qatar: Emerging issues and research agenda', *Education, Business And Society: Contemporary Middle Eastern Issues,* 4, 3, p. 193-206.
- Witherspoon, R & White, R (1997), 'Four Essential Ways That Coaching Can Help Executives' 1997, *Issues & Observations,* 17, 1/2, p. 18.
- Witherspoon, R. (2014) 'Double-Loop Coaching for Leadership Development', *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 50(3), pp. 261–283
- Zenger, J. & Folkman, J (2009) 'Ten Fatal Flaws That Derail Leaders', *Harvard Business Review, June*. Available at: https://hbr.org/2009/06/ten-fatal-flaws-that-derail-leaders (Accessed: 19th November 2019).
- Zhang Yi, Z, Leslie, J, & Hannum, K (2013), 'Trouble Ahead: Derailment Is Alive and Well', *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 55, 1, pp. 95-102.

APPENDIX 1: OVERVIEW OF DOCTORAL DEVELOPMENT & THEMES

Module	CAL Problem	CAL Outcomes	Conclusions
Change & Crisis Management	The change initiative originating in the failed attempt to implement HR rules and guidelines in our branch, investigating hidden assumptions, various roles and different layers.	1. understanding the complexity of issues and problems in my organisation 2. I have been able to show management that there are not always single solutions to certain problems that seem simple; 3. 6-fold action plan to enhance listening, communication, and inclusion of staff	Leadership and strategic advisor were open for advice and learning
Knowledge Creation	The problem is the complex relationship between a branch campus and its local partner organisation leading to miscommunications of processes, different expectations on performance (measures) and problems relating to human resources such as high turn-over and understaffing.	Discussing our organisational development from a macro-strategic point of view has offered a positive focus on the negotiations with our partner organisation. However, I have not been able to solve the problem, nor was able to take ownership on action learning leading to frustration.	Gaining insights into complex decision making and international business strategy by talking to COO and colleagues. Finding out complex layers helped uncover hidden issues.
Leadership	Investigating the reasons for our turn-over rate of 34% (internal study, July 2013), which is considered to be high by our management, and for the perceived working and thinking in silos by organisational members of our branch at all levels	People are leaving because they feel micromanaged and controlled, they are frustrated, feel a lack of creativity and experience dispassionate management from superiors. They experience negative alliances. They see better career opportunities elsewhere, feel unmotivated and uninspired by their tasks or role, and do not experience a positive culture. The reactions refer to a neutral to positive experience of leadership.	Everyone started working in silos and isolation because of protectionism of MT after new COO and CEO/Dean arrived. My new role lacked guidance, mentorship and supervision, without ownership but with accountability.
Action Research	The impact of dysfunctional leadership behaviour on our branch campus in Qatar in terms	In this report, I have identified that dysfunctional behavior in my organisation on an executive level has led to problems on all levels. Promotion to higher functions	Tensions in the leadership team led to tensions across teams. These issues were not adequately

	of sustainability and development.	without getting sufficient coaching and education have led to derailment of executives, which further increased tensions in the senior management team. The tensions have had a negative impact on our organisational culture and have led to communication and collaboration issues.	solved. Managers started to derail or behave aggressively. I became detached.
Decision Making	The level of personal responsibility during escalation of commitment in internal project management and I aim to give clarity on what impacts decision making in internal projects that are highly political and try to find solutions that reduce risk and uncertainty in similar future projects.	Based on examples of other organisational members invited to our team meetings it became clear that 'escalation of commitment' is a vicious circle in my organisation: decisions are often delayed due to a combined lack of personal responsibility and fear of political consequences. I uncovered that the current renegotiation of our contract with our influential local partner is putting a lot of pressure on our leadership team and raises expectations to perform and deliver. Fear to underperform and being fired, selective communication upwards and downwards.	I found it difficult to make executive decisions as I was not empowered by my line manager and did not receive the trust to do so. I postponed tough decisions.
Ethics	Why do organisational members tolerate unethical behaviour in the workplace?	Clearly, not all of our organisational issues have been solved, but I managed to plant some seeds here and there while having discussions with colleagues and c-level on business ethics, company values, shared values with the business community, our contribution to the national vision, and pointing towards the necessity to re-engage employees otherwise some key figures will leave the organisation soon. I see this as a form of sense making and creating awareness amongst organisational members on different levels (Ray et al, 2011; Seiling & Hinrichs, 2005). Suggested case study for organisational action learning.	Leadership had been under pressure for years due to contract negotiations with partner organisation. Started to behave irrationally, aggressively, unethically. Out of fear for repercussion, people observed but did not do anything. I did not report anything either and became demotivated and detached.
Thesis Research	If I am derailing, what can be done to prevent this?	1. First conclusion is that I showed tendencies to derail, but my leadership as well – influencing each other;	Because my organisation lacked feedback loops, learning opportunities,

	2. Recovery & prevention has to happen on an organisational level (implementing strategies to detect and prevent derailment by careful planning & development, creating a culture of action learning), team level (regular honest feedback, with or without coaching) and individual level (self-reflection, self-leadership). 3. After several loops of investigation over two years I was able to synthesise everything into US-WE-ME model and toolkit.	coaching opportunities, governance /HR department, and suffered from protectionism and organisational silence, derailing individuals could not be rescued. Misbehaving leaders stayed in their positions because the structure and culture were enabling authoritarianism, and privileged positions.

NB: Red means potential derailment elements that I could use in the case study narrative.

APPENDIX 2: CHECKLISTS[7]

CHECKLIST AFTER CASE A

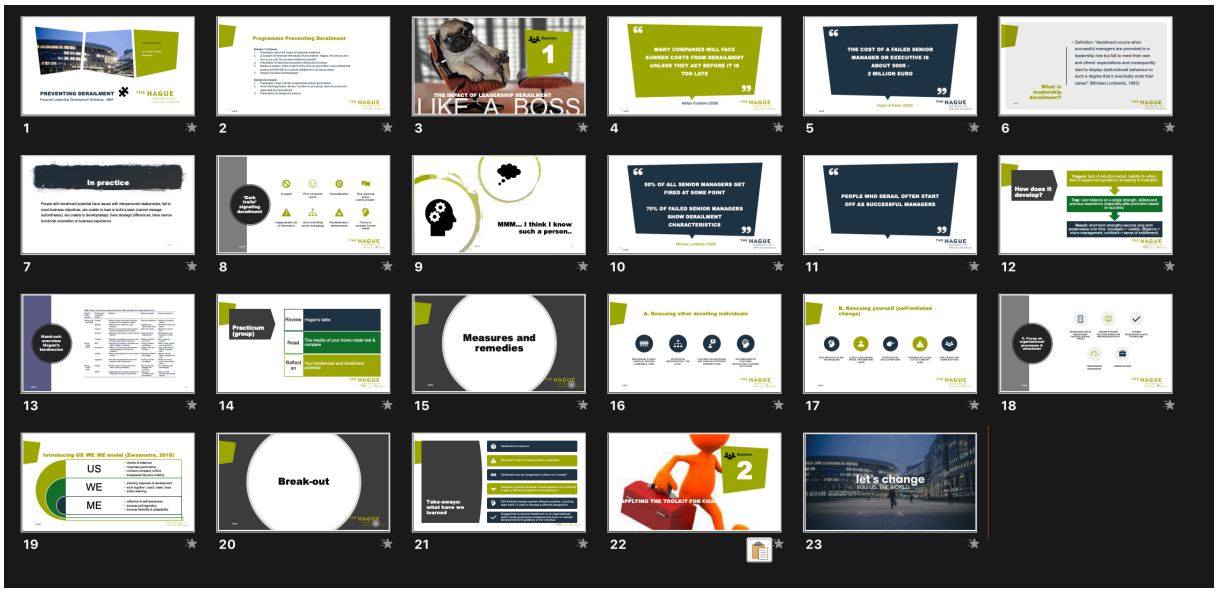
	TRAITS	TRUE	FALSE
1	DOES NOT DEVELOP SUBORDINATES		X
2	DOES NOT RESOLVE CONFLICT AMONG OR WITH SUBORDINATES		X
3	DOES NOT DELEGATE, LIKE TO DO IT ALONE		X
4	GETS IRRITATED EASILY (ESPECIALLY WITH THOSE WHO ARE SEEN AS LESS ABLE)	X	
5	OVER RELIES ON SELF OR TECHNICAL SKILLS	X	
6	HANDS ON MANAGER TO A FAULT		X
7	LACKS ATTENTION TO DETAIL		X
8	THINGS SLIP THROUGH THE CRACKS OFTEN		X
9	INVOLVED TOO MUCH	X	
10	SEEN AS VERY AMBITIOUS AND FOCUSED ON NEXT JOB		X
11	ABRASIVE	X	
12	MAKES OTHERS FEEL STUPID OR DIMINISHED	X (upwards)	X (downwards)
13	VOLATILE UNDER PRESSURE	X	
14	DOESN'T GET THE MOST OUT OF PEOPLE		X
15	LEAVES PEOPLE DANGLING UNDER UNMET PROMISES	X (upwards)	X (downwards)
16	HAS STAYED WITH THE SAME PERSON TOO LONG (BOSS, MENTOR)		X
17	OVER-RELIES ON CORE TALENT (ENERGY, BRAINS, SUBORDINATES)	X	
18	DOESN'T SELL/CAJOLE WELL	X	
19	HAS TO WIN	X	
20	HAS TROUBLE ADAPTING TO THOSE WITH DIFFERENT STYLE	X	

[7] From: Kaiser et al (2015), Lombardo & Eichinger (1989), Carson et al (2012)

CHECKLIST AFTER CASE B

	ITEM	YES / TRUE	NO / FALSE
1	DOES NOT DEVELOP SUBORDINATES		x
2	DOES NOT RESOLVE CONFLICT AMONG OR WITH SUBORDINATES		X
3	DOES NOT DELEGATE, LIKE TO DO IT ALONE	x	
4	GETS IRRITATED EASILY (ESPECIALLY WITH THOSE WHO ARE SEEN AS LESS ABLE)	X	
5	OVER RELIES ON SELF OR TECHNICAL SKILLS	X	
6	HANDS ON MANAGER TO A FAULT	x	
7	LACKS ATTENTION TO DETAIL	x	
8	THINGS SLIP THROUGH THE CRACKS OFTEN	x	
9	INVOLVED TOO MUCH	X	
10	SEEN AS VERY AMBITIOUS AND FOCUSED ON NEXT JOB	x	
11	ABRASIVE	X	
12	MAKES OTHERS FEEL STUPID OR DIMINISHED	X (upwards)	X (downwards)
13	VOLATILE UNDER PRESSURE		x
14	DOESN'T GET THE MOST OUT OF PEOPLE		X
15	LEAVES PEOPLE DANGLING UNDER UNMET PROMISES		X
16	HAS STAYED WITH THE SAME PERSON TOO LONG (BOSS, MENTOR)		X
17	OVER-RELIES ON CORE TALENT (ENERGY, BRAINS, SUBORDINATES)	X	
18	DOESN'T SELL/CAJOLE WELL	X	
19	HAS TO WIN	X	
20	HAS TROUBLE ADAPTING TO THOSE WITH DIFFERENT STYLE	x	

APPENDIX 3: SAMPLES OF ACTUAL WORKSHOP ON DERAILMENT PREVENTION FOR THUAS



29 november 2018

Drs. Manon Pieper-Zwaanstra

PREVENTING DERAILMENT

Personal Leadership Development Workshop - MBA

THE HAGUE UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Programme Preventing Derailment

Session 1 (3 hours)

1. Presentation about the impact of leadership derailment
2. Discussion of homework test results (16 personalities, Hogan): who are you and how do you act? Do you have derailment potential?
3. Presentation of derailment prevention methods and remedies
4. Break-out session: reflect on which entry point you would take in your professional practice (US-WE-ME) to (1) prevent derailment or (2) rescue others.
5. Plenary discussion and takeaways.

Session 2 (3 hours)

1. Presentation: how to decide on appropriate actions and activities.
2. Action learning practice: discuss 1 problem in your group, draw rich picture and apply what you have learned.
3. Presentation of findings and wrap-up

THE HAGUE UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

2 *1/3/19*

What is leadership derailment?

- Definition: “derailment occurs when successful managers are promoted to a leadership role but fail to meet their own and others’ expectations and consequently start to display dysfunctional behaviour to such a degree that it eventually ends their career” (Michael Lombardo, 1983)

1/3/19 6

THE HAGUE UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

In practice

People with derailment potential have issues with interpersonal relationships, fail to meet business objectives, are unable to lead or build a team (cannot manage subordinates), are unable to develop/adapt, have strategic differences, have narrow functional orientation or business experience.

1/3/19 7

How does it develop?

Triggers: lack of induction period, inability to reflect, lack of support and guidance; all leading to frustration.

Trap: over-reliance on a single strength, skillset and previous experience (especially after promotion based on success)

Result: short-term strengths become long term weaknesses over time. (energetic > volatile; diligence > micro-management; confident > sense of entitlement)

THE HAGUE UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

1/3/19 12

A. Rescuing other derailing individuals

DISCUSSING 2 EARLY CASES BY MICHAEL LOMBARDO (1988)

INITIATED BY ORGANISATION / TOP LEVEL

FOCUSES ON EXPOSURE AND GAINING DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

ACCOMPANIED BY COACHING, REFLECTION, PLANNED ACTIVITIES

1/3/19

THE HAGUE UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

16


B. Rescuing yourself (self-initiated change)
SELF-REFLECTION: AM I THE PROBLEM?
COACH: UNCOVERING TRAITS, TRIGGERS AND TRAPS
STORYTELLING: HELICOPTER VIEW
PLANNING ACTIVITIES OUT OF COMFORT ZONE
FIND A BUDDY AND WORK IN A TEAM
1/3/19
THE HAGUE UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
17


C. Focus on organizational processes & structures
REVIEW SELECTION & RECRUITMENT PROCESS (TESTING, TRAITS)
ENSURE A PROPER INDUCTION PERIOD FOR NEW/PROMOTED STAFF
PLANNED DEVELOPMENT (CHECK FOR REALISM)
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT
CAREER PATHING
1/3/19
THE HAGUE UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
18


Take-aways: what have we learned
Derailment is common
Derailment does not always lead to resignation
Derailment can be recognized in others or in oneself
Externally initiated remedies include exposure and coaching to gain a different perspective and experience
Self-initiated change requires reflective practice, coaching, team work, in order to develop a different perspective
Suggestions to prevent derailment on an organizational level include governance measures and focus on realistic development and guidance of the individual
1/3/19
21
APPLIED SCIENCES


let's change
YOU. US. THE WORLD.